

THE TRIALL OF<sup>3</sup>  
A  
CHRISTIANS  
SINCERE LOVE  
VNTO CHRIST.

By M<sup>r</sup> WILLIAM PINKE,  
M<sup>r</sup> of Arts late Fellow of  
Magdalen Colledge  
in OXFORD.

Ο ἑμὸς ἕως ἑσπέρου. Ignat. Ep. ad Rom.

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THE THIRD EDITION

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THE TRIAL OF

A

CHRISTIAN

SINGER LOVE

WYTO CHRIST

BY WILLIAM PINK  
M. A. and Fellow of  
Merton College  
Oxford.

First Edition

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1844

AT THE


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TO THE  
HONOV RABLE  
AND TRVLY  
Noble Lord, the Lord  
GEORGE DIGBY,  
*Sonne and Heire of the Right  
Honourable the Earle  
of BRISTOLL.*

*Right Honourable and  
my very Good Lord,*

 HAT I haue pre-  
sumed to present  
to your Lordships  
Patronage, these  
few Sermons of a deceased  
worthy friend, it is not so  
much the acknowledgmt  
of those great favours and  
noble respects wherewith  
you were pleased to grace  
A 2 Him,

### *The Epistle*

Him , and since his death  
haue vouchsafed to extend  
to mee your vnworthy ser-  
vant as a due consideration  
(if in Dedicatiōs matchable-  
nesse be to be regarded (how  
properly and peculiarly they  
doe belong to your Lord-  
ship both in respect of the  
Authour and the Argument.  
The Authour was one ,  
whom, for his singular dex-  
terity in the Arts , depth  
of iudgement, sharpnesse of  
wit, and especially his sklll in  
languages, Hebrew, Greeke,  
Arabicke, you were pleased  
to make choice of for one of  
your Readers during your  
abode at *Magdalen Colledge*  
in *Oxon* , in which time you  
so

*Dedicatory.*

so obliged him by the abundant testimonies of your good affection to him, that He oft professed to mee how great & iust an interest your merits claimed in all his studies and labours. This which you here see is but an Essay to some master-peece which you might haue expected, if he had liued to finish what he attempted in the Greek Antiquities, & obseruations on the Hebrew Text. For the matter, it being a Theame of the weightiest businesse in Christianity, the groundworke of all; which if it bee not first rooted in the heart, all other our conclusions and speculations in Diuinity will

### *The Epistle*

bee but like the building a  
Castle in the ayre, and may  
giue the soule content per-  
haps, of a rare speculation,  
but cannot of a powerfull,  
experimentall, soule-quick-  
ning, and soule sauing Reli-  
gion: The Argument, I say,  
being such, as I could not  
harden my selfe against the  
requests of some whodesired  
the publishing thereof for  
the good many soules might  
reape by it, so neither could  
I thinke any, fitter to Patro-  
nage a Theam of piety, than  
one who shewed himselfe a-  
mongst vs, both a Patron &  
an example of it. I would be  
as farre from flattery as you  
are from the want of it, and I  
would

### *Dedicatory.*

would not, you should  
looke your selfe in a false  
Glasse: ouerweening in any  
man is a thing that exposeth  
to secret contempt, when-  
soeuer the weaknesse shall  
be espied, but Great men so  
much the more, by how  
much they are the more  
observed, and haue occasi-  
on oftner to come vpon the  
stage. You remēber what  
manner of man he was, se-  
rious in his studies, deuout  
& strict in an holy conuer-  
sation, the things you lo-  
ued in him, and imitated: A  
singular Omen, when No-  
ble mē begin betimes to be  
countenancers of goodnes  
and good men: so perseuere

## The Epistle

\* 1 King.  
18.

\* 1 Sami.  
2. 30.

to doe like a good *Obadiah*\*  
the Church shall blesse you  
and God shall honour you,  
\* *For those that honour him,*  
*he will honour, and them that*  
*despise him hee will cower*  
*with shame,* either by bring-  
ing on them some notable  
judgement, or by giuing  
them vp to such headlong  
courses and filthy vices,  
whereby their honour shall  
be stained, their estates wa-  
sted, themselves and their  
posterity ruined (it being  
not vnusuall with God to  
punish men by their owne  
deuices and sinnes wherein  
they delight.) And so doth  
your Lordship perseuere to  
doe, I will not load your  
modesty

### *Dedatory.*

modesty with a slender report of your owne worth : What perhaps I ought to say , your Lordship may guesse by what the people doe say of you , and what I should commend vnto you ( if I were able or worthy ) by what the world expects from you: I know there is nothing more vaine then to liue by opinion , by what men say or expect; opinion is but an ill rule and gouernesse of our liues and actions (another mans measure being too long, or too short for me) yet this vse we may make of it; when men begin to applaud and take notice of that which our selues haue:

## The Epistle

haue the greatest reason to  
study & affect, it may serue  
to raise our vertues to an  
higher pitch, than our own  
priuity could lightly bring  
them, the loue & practise of  
any good increasing with  
the acceptance it findes a-  
broad: But I forget what I  
haue in hand, I close all  
with apprecatiō of all hap-  
pinesse to your Lordship:  
the God of Ioseph double  
vpon you the blessings of  
Ioseph, \* Blessed let him  
make you for the precious  
things of Heauen, and of the  
deep that coucheth beneath,  
for the precious things of the  
Earth, & the fulnesse there-  
of, but especially, for the  
good

\* Deut. 33.  
13. 6.



*Dedicatory.*

good will of him, that dwells  
in the Bush : Doe worthily  
in Ephratah; \* and bee you \* Ruth. 4.  
famous in our Israel : The 11.

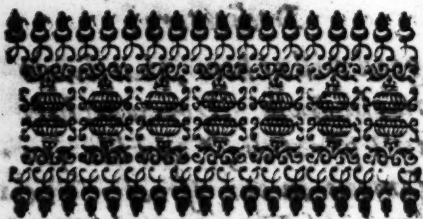
seeds of Vertue and pious  
education wherewith your  
tender yeeres haue beene  
seasoned, let them budde  
and yeeld their pleasant &  
whollome fruit in their sea-  
sons. I still trespasse. *Mo-  
neo, quod facis*

*Spondes digna tuis ingenti- Virg.  
bus omnia captis. Aen. 9*

Shirburn. Iul. 7. 1630.

*Your Lordships humble  
and deuoted seruant,*

**WILLIAM LYFORD.**



## To the Reader.

**O**ur teawes Reader :  
I here present thee  
with some peeces  
& fragments of an  
intire and iust discourse in-  
tended by the Author, con-  
cerning that usefull & wor-  
thy Argument, the sinceri-  
ty and triall of a Christians  
loue to Christ : It was the  
glory of the last age, that a-  
mong other miracles, God  
blesed it with the resurre-  
ction of Learning, it being  
being.

## To the Reader.

being a time wherein lived  
and flourished men famous  
for learning and piety, who  
sent abroad into the world  
many large volumes for the  
vindicating of Gods true Re-  
ligion and worship from Bar-  
barisme, Error, and Super-  
stition: And 'tis a part of the  
happinesse of this our Age,  
that (beside the same truth  
still maintained) it hath sent  
forth many famous Trea-  
tises concerning the nature  
of faith, the power and pra-  
ctise of Religion. Amongst  
which, this would not have  
beene of the least note, if the  
Author himselfe had lived  
to finish it. A continua-  
tion and perfecting whereof

## To the Reader.

I cannot hope for from others, much lesse dare I presume to attempt it my selfe, as euer loathing that solacisme,

*Hor. Art. Poet.*

—vt turpiter atrum  
Definat in piscem mulier  
formosa supernè.

Take therefore these Sermons as they were deliuered and left by him: What is done in them I had rather should appeare to thy iudgement in the serious reading, then from my opinion of them: onely let mee intreate thee to read them with the same spirit they were written (for that's the way to profit by other mens works) and content.

## To the Reader.

Content not thy selfe to trifle away some oddo houre in the, but reserve them to some of thy most retired thoughts and severest meditations, so maist thou by Gods blessing finde something to strengthen the assurances of thy hopes by Christ, and to encrease thy future care and love to sincerity. In which respects, if they profit any into whose hands they come, I shall lesse blame the importunity of some who for that cause earnestly desired them, and the lesse regard the censure of others, who may haply mislike the publishing of them. As his conversation was sweet, so is his memory precious,

## To the Reader.

pretious, to mee as to any o-  
ther: Neither can I thinke it  
any way stained by the ser-  
vice of lone, wherein I chose  
rather to giue life to some  
things of His, than that all  
should die with him. All the  
good bee thine, and all the  
Glory, Gods. Farewell.

Thine in the truest  
Bond.

W. LYFORD.

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I. COR. 16. V. 22.

*If any man loue not the Lord  
Iesus Christ, let him bee  
Anathema Maranatha.*



SAINTE PAUL  
being now to  
close vp his E-  
pistle to the Co-  
rinthians, and  
hauing thus far

used the helpe of a Scribe is  
willing to giue them the fare-  
well salutation in his owne  
hand-writing: *The salutation  
of mee Paul with my owne hand,*  
in the verse before my Text.  
His salutation in this as in all  
the rest of his Epistles is a so-  
lemne Apostolicall benedicti-  
on,

## 2 *The triall of a Christians*

The misery of those that professe Christ for outward carnall respects.

on, wishing them the grace & fauour of God in Iesus Christ in the verse following my Text. But now knowing too well how many false brethren there were at Corinth, who were content indeed to professe Christ for some outward carnall respects, but did grossely dissemble with him in their hearts, least such should misapply this comfortable salutation vnto themselves, least such dogs should imagine these holy things to be giuen them, hee salutes them after another manner, and preuents their presumption by this terrible, thundering execration: *If any man doe not the Lord Iesus Christ, let him bee Anathema Maranatha.*

This Text is somewhat obscure by reason of the strange words which are in it which  
( setting



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 3

( setting aside all curiosity ) I will vnfold as nakedly as I can, that I may in few words lay open a plaine way to the sense and instructiue matter of this Scripture. The word *Anathema* is a Greeke word : in English it signifies *Accursed* : The words *Maran-atha* are Syriack, & signify in English, *Our Lord cometh*. That the full meaning of the holy Ghost in the vse of these words may more cleerely bee conceaued by you ; you are to bee aduertised that in this Text there is an allusion vnto the Iewish manner of Excommunication which was twofold. 1. The first kinde of it called *Niddus* was onely a separation for a time, commonly for thirty dayes from all commerce or society with any man within a certaine distance. This is thought to bee that which is called

The interpretation of the words *Anathema Maran-atha*.

The Iewish manner of excommunication is twofold.

#### 4 The triall of a Christians

called in the New Testament a casting out of the Synagogue.

2. The second more seuerer and terrible then the former was, when a scandalous offender with curses out of the law of *Moses* was in the publike audience of the whole Church, without any limitation of time excluded from the communion of it. This is thought to be that which is called in the new Testament a deliuering vp vnto *Sathan*. This in Hebrew *Che-rem*, in Greeke is called *Anathema*, which word you haue in the Text. This *Anathema* was twofold, 1. Simple when what I haue now mentioned was performed. 2. With an addition, *Anathema Maran-atha*, when besides all other maledictions out of the law they added this clause, *Our Lord commeth*: By which forme the ex-  
commu-

A twofold  
*Anathema*,

*Sincere loue vnto Christ.* 3

communicated person as desperate & quite forlorne, without all hope of pardon or restitution, was left into the hands of the Lord to receaue from him an heauy doome at his coming. This then being applied vnto my Text the sense runnes thus: If any man loue not the Lord Iesus Chrill, let him bee accursed and that in the most desperate manner, expecting due vengeance from the Lord when hee commeth *in iudicio* *as it is*, with his holy millions to execute iudgement vpon all, and to conuince all that are vngodly, as it is in *Enochs* Prophecie recorded by *S. Iude*, to which this last degree of excommunication *Maran-atha* (or as the Syrians pronounce it) *Moran-etho*, our Lord commeth, may probably seeme to haue speciall reference. If any man &c. By any

The meaning of the Text.

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any man vnderstand any man that liues in the light of the Gospell, that professes and thinkes himsele a Christian; for to such *S. Paul* directs his speech; if any man thus qualified loue not Christ Iesus let him bee accursed in the highest degree. It cannot be expected that such as sit in the darknesse of Gentilisme should loue that Christ whom they haue not heard: and therefore albeit their case bee lamentable because they heare of no Sauour, yet sure theirs is farre more fearefull who heare him daily preaching in their streets, and take little notice of him, but neglect him and trample him vnder foot. *If any man loue not*: some imagine an Hebraisme to lye couched in these words, *Loue not*, supposing the sense to bee, if any man hate; and indeed

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 7

deed this is the sense, but in my weake iudgement the conceit of an Hebraisme is needlesse, seeing that as our Sauour tells vs *Luk. 11. 23. Hee that is not with him is against him*, and questionlesse, whosoever professes his name, and yet loue him not, hee hates him at the very heart. But if my coniecture deceaue me not, my Text may receaue excellent light from *Ephes. 6. v. vlt. Grace be with all them that loue our Lord Iesus Christ in ἀφραδια, in purity or sincerity*. I suppose those whom Saint Paul curses in my Text to be directly opposed to those whom hee there blesses; and seeing to the Ephesians hee blesses those who loued Christ with an vncorrupt, vnmixed, vnfaigned loue, it's likely that in my Text hee bestowes his imprecations vpon those who  
make

8 *The triall of a Christians*

great shewes of loue vnto Christ with their mouthes, but vnderalue and despise him in their hearts.

The Text being thus explained (not to mangle it with an vnecessary diuision) affords this materiall doctrine. Whosoever hee bee that professes himselfe a Christian, and thinks himselfe verily to bee so, and yet hath not the loue of Christ Iesus kindled and settled in his heart is in a most dangerous and cursed estate.

Great variety of reasons and proofes might bee produced for the enlargemet and confirmation of this point: those which I intend to make vse of, I will reduce vnto two generall considerations, which will sufficiently manifest both how fearefully and how iustly hee stands accursed, who professing

2 Generall  
considera-  
tions pre-  
mised for  
the confir-  
mation of  
the point.

*sincere loue vnto Christ.*

sing Christ Iesus with his mouth entertaineth him not with his best affections in his heart. 1. My first consideration is this, that whosoever hath not imbraced Christ Iesus with the sweetest vnion of real loue, hath no part in him, and therefore all the curses of the Law stand in full force against him. I shall not need to insist vpon the aggrauation of the wofull condition of him who is yet in bondage to the law. Marke, I beseech you, the exquisite rigour of it comprised in that one sentence *Dent. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10.* *Cursed is euery one who continueth not in all things which are written in the booke of the Law to doe them.* O then how infinitely accursed are all of vs naturally, who on the contrary, haue continued in the violation of all things which are  
B written

1 All the curses of the Law are due vnto him, that doth not really loue Christ Iesus.

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written in it. I am perswaded  
(howsoever some proud here-  
tiques of these times haue pra-  
cticed) that there is no man so stu-  
pid, or senselesse of the misery  
of being tried by the Law with-  
out any appeale vnto the Gos-  
pell but in his serious moodes  
when God shall in some mea-  
sure awak his conscience, he will  
confesse it had beene better for  
him neuer to haue been borne,  
then that God without the me-  
diation of his Sonne should call  
him to a punctuall account for  
the most harmelesse and vno-  
fensive day of his whole life.  
Now what can a man haue to  
comfort and secure his soule in  
these sad meditations but this,  
that God is superabundantly  
mercifull, in so much that hee  
*sent his owne Sonne to redeeme*  
*vs from the curse of the law, and*  
*to bee made a curse for vs, Ga-*  
*lat.*

The wo-  
full estate  
of him to  
whom the  
Law shall  
be a Iudge.



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 11

lat. 3. 13. These indeed are heavenly consolations and such as neuer faile those who are rightly qualified for them: But now they appertaine not to such as loue not Christ Iesus, to such as know not how to value and worthily esteeme the glorious purchases of his passion.

It's true; God is mercifull infinitely aboue all finite conceit;

Gods mercy excludes not his iustice.

but so is hee iust too: Magnifie his mercy as long as thou wilt, thou canst neuer doe it enough, but when all is done thou maist say as much for his iustice as S.

*Paul, Rom. 11. 22.* equally admires *the goodnesse and seuerity*

*of God.* Whosoever he be then, who lookes for mercy from

God without Christ, who only hath satisfied his iustice,

dreames not so much to finde God mercifull as to finde

him vniust. Now to come nearer to the point, can any man

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bee so sottish or impudently presumptuous as to hope to fare the better for Christ who sees nothing desirable in him? Who is so far from counting all things dung, that hee may winne him, as S. Paul did, *Phil. 3. 8.* that hee euen prefers dung the basest trash and vanities of the world before him? Is it likely that hee should haue any reliefe from the Gospell, who is so farre from counting all things losse for the excellency of the knowledge contained in it, as Saint Paul did, that he can taste no such excellency in it, that he should loose one farthing, forbear one pleasure, forgoe one vanity for it. Our Sauour himselfe, *Mat. 10. 37.* expressly tels vs, *He that loueth Father or Mother more thū me is not worthy of mee*, that is, whosoever loues what he hath best reason

They can  
haue no  
benefit by  
Christ who  
prefer plea-  
sure or pro-  
fit before  
him.

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 13

to loue in this life more the his  
Sauour, is not worthy to haue a-  
ny benefit by him, to haue any  
share in his merits? What then  
thinke wee, can they expect  
from him, who are so coldly  
affected towards him, that they  
preferre euery trifle before  
him? *All the promises of God*  
(saith the Apostle) *2. Cor. 1.*  
*20. in him (in Christ Iesus) are*  
*yea, and in him Amen*, that is,  
sure and infallible. But still in  
Christ Iesus. And what's this  
to any man if hee himselfe bee  
not in him? And how can hee  
bee in him but by louing him.  
The accursed estate of the false-  
hearted Christian who pre-  
sumes much vpon CHRIST,  
whom indeed he hath nothing  
to doe with, will more af-  
fright him if hee would but  
consider it in other men. Who  
is there amongst vs but will

B 3..

much

#### 14 *The triall of a Christians*

The lamentable condition of the savage Indian.

much pittie and bemoane the lamentable condition of the poore Indians, and other Sannages of the vnchristian world, whose soules are ouerclouded with the blackest mists of irreligion that the Prince of darke-nes can possibly inwrap them, who come into the world knowing not wherefore, and goe out of it dreaming not whither; but liue here a while without God in the world, and then goe to the generation of their fathers, where they *shall neuer see the light* to vse the words of the Psalmist, *Psal. 49.*

A formall Christian is in as bad a case in respect of the world to come as the Silliest Indian.

19. A heavy case indeed beyond all expression of a Tragedy, and which cannot bee sufficiently bewailed with an ocean of teares of blood. But now whosoeuer hee bee within the Paradise of the Christian Church who hath nothing to distin-

distinguish him from these miscreants but his outward conformity to the lawes and customs of the place where hee liues, who hath nothing to proue himselfe a Christian but outward formalities, the charity of other men, and his owne sleight imaginations whosoever hee bee that hath not as yet espied something in Christ Iesus so amiable as that in earnest it may challenge his whole heart before all the pompe and pleasure in the world, I say that man whosoever hee bee may keepe his moanes and teares for himselfe: it's his owne case: for, for the present vntill the spirit of grace shall startle him vnto more sense of the mercies of Christ, hee is in as bad a case as the silliest Indian. I meane in respect of the world to come, for in this

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life the most dissembling Christian is partaker of many sweet blessings which the Gospoll vses to carry about with it fro countrey to countrey, by which it ciuillizeth and polliſheth the most rude and barbarous nations. But for the ioyes of eternity, what better claime can hee lay vnto them then the wild American? Hee hath no more to doe with Christ then the other. Hee hath lined indeed where hee hath heard much talke of Christ, of redemption, and the glorious liberty of the Sonnes of God; but what's all this to him who could neuer rellish any of these things, who neuer tooke them to heart, neuer could find any sweetnesse in them but passed them ouer like some vncouth mysticall fables? Beloued we must not thinke that li-  
uing,

It is a pure  
sincere loue  
of Christ  
that distin-  
guisheth vs  
from Infidels.

uing within the ayre of the  
Gospell, amongst Churches  
and Bibles, can distinguish vs  
from Infidels, exempt vs from  
the rigour of the law, and en-  
title vs to Christ? No such mat-  
ter. *Christ came vnto his owne but*  
*his owne receaued him not,* saith  
*S. Iohn* were his owne then euer  
the better for him? Not a whit.  
Our Saviour whilst hee was  
talking with the Iewes, *Ioh. 3.*  
*40.* tells them. *Yee will not*  
*come vnto mee that yee might*  
*haue life:* Hee was come vnto  
them, but they would not  
come vnto him. Albeit then  
Christ visit vs, neuer so fre-  
quently, if wee welcome him  
not with that ioy with which  
*Zachary* once did, though hee  
passe neuer so often by our  
hearts, if wee inuite him not  
in, and get him to sup and lodge  
with vs, wee must looke to get

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no more by him then those vn-  
happy miscreants who neuer  
heard of his name. It's consi-  
derable to this purpose which  
*S. Paul* hath, *Gal. 5. 6.* In  
*Christ Iesus neither circumcision*  
*nor vncircumcision auaieth any*  
*thing, but faith which worketh*  
*by loue,* that is, outward markes  
or priuiledges aduantage a man  
nothing in *Christ Iesus* vnlesse  
hee bee so sensibly perswaded  
of those miracles of compassi-  
on which *Christ* hath perfor-  
med for his soule, that vpon  
this perswasion hee thinkes he  
can neuer loue him enough and  
therefore submits his whole  
soule vnto him in a vniuersall  
obedience vnto his will.

An expla-  
nation of  
*Psal. 2.*  
Kisse the  
Sonne, &c.

To draw towards a conclu-  
sion of this point, let vs scanne  
a little *Psal. 2. 12.* *Kisse the*  
*Sonne* least hee bee angry and yee  
perish from the way, and this  
Psalme.



Psalme containes a cleere prophetic of our Sauour and such great ones of the world as should oppose themselues against him, whom yet the Prophet vouchsafeth to direct, v. 10. For all this they might make their peace with God: the chiete part of the direction is set downe in the words which you haue now heard; *Kisse the Sonne*, that is, reuerence, respect, embrace the Sonne of God. Why so? Least by his anger yee perish from the way: from what way? The Syriack interpreteter tells you *me vrkeh* from his way. He himselfe is the onely way vnto his Eather, to whom *no man cometh but by him*, as himselfe tells vs in the Gospell. Whosoever therefore stands off from Christ Iesus, and strives not to kisse, that is, to be vnited vnto him

20 *The triall of a Christians.*

him by the choicest twinnes of dearest affection must needes perishe out of the way to life, continue still in his sinnes expecting all the curses of the Law to fall vpon him. *The law was our Schoolemaster to bring vs vnto Christ*, saith the Apostle, *Gal. 3. 24.* What to bring vs within the sound of his name? To bring vs to talke and discourse of him? More then so, to amaze vs with the horrour of our sins, and to make vs feeble what need wee haue of a Saviour, and ha-ning one offered vs, to lay fast hold on him whatsoeuer it cost vs, and to prize him aboue all the Iewels in the world. But if the Law cannot preuaile so much with vs as to make vs groane for a redeemer, to make vs come crouching vnder our burdens vnto Christ Iesus, wee must continue still vnder the lash,

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 21

lash. It's true which the Apoc-  
hath, v. seq. that *after faith is*  
*come wee are no longer vnder a*  
*Schoolemaster* : But if this faith  
which is inseparably ioyned  
with loue neuer come, we are  
sure to smart vnder his heavy  
hand through all eternity.

You haue heard the first part  
of his burden who in the light  
of the Gospell does not really  
loue Christ Iesus to wit, that he  
has no part in Christ & therefore  
all the curses of the law belong  
vnto him. One would thinke  
there needed no more to bee  
said to proue him accursed who  
loues not Christ Iesus seeing  
this hauing no part in him in-  
cludes more horrors and ter-  
rors then it's possible for the  
braine of man to shape the Ide-  
ates of. But I must tell you that  
as heavy a doome as this is, yet  
is it but light in comparison of  
which

22 *The triall of a Christians*

2 Consi-  
deration.  
Great  
plagues re-  
maine for  
those that  
doe not  
sincerely  
loue Christ  
but doe co-  
temne the  
Gospell.

which I shall describe vnto  
you in a second consideration,  
to wit, whosoever hee be that  
is Catechised and brought vp  
in the Christian profession and  
yet doth not heartily and sin-  
cerely affect Christ Iesus be-  
fides all the curses due vnto his  
sinnes against the Law, he trea-  
sures vp vnto himselfe a farre  
more compleat vengeance for  
his disesteeme and contempt of  
the Gospell. It were well, be-  
loued, if when Christ Iesus  
comes vnto a man and that man  
receaues him not, if hee left  
him in no worse case then hee  
found him, though that were  
vnconceauably miserable: But  
it's neuer so. For if hee enter-  
taynes not Christ as a Sauour,  
hee is sure to haue him hence  
forth his accuser, and if he will  
not admit him *ad salutem*, hee  
shall haue him whether hee  
will.

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 23.

will or no *ad Testimonium*. It's true which our Sauiour told *Nicodemus Ioh. 3. 17.* That God sent not his Sonne into the World to condemne the world, but that the world through him be saued: Christ doth not knocke at any mans heart with that intent that he may haue the more aduantage against him if he let him not in, no hee comes with purpose and desire to brind in saluation with him, but if hee and his saluation be so little regarded that we entertaine him onely with a few cold complements at doore, as I may say, and so dismisse him. O then he goes away in a rage, complaines to his father that for such vngratefull wretches hee shed his dearest blood. And therefore though God sent not his Sonne into the world to condemne it, yet it followes in the next verse.

24. *The triall of a Christians*

verse, *Hee that belieneth not is condemned already, because hee belieneth not in the name of the onely begotten Sonne of God. Condemned &c. hee beleeueth not. Why?* the Law had sufficiently cōdemned him before. True, but now God offers him a pardon by his Son to exempt him from cōdemnation, which seeing hee scornes, or cares not to accept, God will now not onely haue the other condemnation to continue it's force against him, but hee will load him with another more heavy, which shall neuer be reuerſed by any pardon. This is made more plaine by the verse following, *This is the condemnation that light is come into the world and men loue darknesse rather then light, that is;* For this is that great and finall condemnation, which can ne-

*sincere love unto Christ.* 25

uer bee remitted, as that of the Law may, that Christ is come into the world bringing redemption with him, and men are so little sensible of it, so dully affected with it, that they care not for making any use of him, but had rather continue Satan's prisoners still, then come forth into his maruailous light. So that the neglect of Christ Iesus and his Gospell, is that which makes a man compleatly *Anathema Maranatha*, because if we passe by him there remaines henceforth no more sacrifice for sinne but a fearefull expectation of Judgement: Hebr. 10. 26. Mistake mee not beloued, when I say there remaines no more sacrifice for sinne to those who haue passed by Christ Iesus, I meane such as haue passed him by for good and all, such as are not entirely incorporated

The contempt of the Gospell of Christ can neuer be remitted.

26 *The triall of a Christians*

porated into him before they are snatched out of this life. For indeed wee haue a redeemer so sensible of our infirmities that when hee comes a wooing vnto our soules, hee will not bee driuen away at the first deniall. Alas, if he should be so touchy, there would hardly euer any soule bee espoused to him, seeing all of vs naturally hang backe, find excuses, and make many pauses, and demurres, before wee giue our consent. But our Sauour is so patient towards our follies, that for all his repulse hee will vouchsafe to come againe and againe, waite our leasure, take all opportunity sollicite the businesse by his holy spirit. But here is no ground for presumption. For whosoever denies him so often, or so peremptorily, that he is forced as if it were to leaue  
of

The wo-  
full estate  
of those  
that deny  
the grati-  
ous prof-  
fers of  
Christ Ie-  
sus.



of his sute, during the life of the party, or whosoever dallies so long with him, that hee is called out of this life (as who can promise himselfe an houre) before the match bee made vp, I say whosoever shall sleight his Sauour, or neglect him after this manner, it had beene a thousand times better for him, that Christ had neuer been borne into the world, or at least that himselfe had beene borne in such an obscure corner of it, that hee had neuer heard of him. For his outward profession of and with all the prerogative, of it, with which hee contented himselfe without any hearty loue vnto him, the faire offers of saluation which hee had, and made nothing of, shall presse him more heauily at the day of Iudgement, then all his sins against the law, though they

28 *The triall of a Christians*  
they were murders, and adul-  
teryes; when for these very  
reasons it shall bee easier for  
Turkes, Americans, and Virgi-  
nians then for him.

The reason  
of all this  
mischiefe  
that falls  
vpon the  
contem-  
ners of  
Christ,  
is because  
the con-  
tempt of  
the Gospell  
is a sinne  
against all  
Persons in  
the Trini-  
ty.

If you demand the reason of  
all this mischiefe, it is because  
the not laying to heart of what  
Christ hath done for vs, and the  
not-receiuing him being offer-  
red vs with the thankfull affe-  
ctions of loue and reuerence,  
vnmixed delight, and compleat  
content in him is the highest  
dishonour, and basest indignity  
(except wilfull Apostacy, or  
malicious blasphemy) which  
can bee offered by a sinfull  
man to the most blessed and  
glorious Trinity. Should I stand  
to recount and amplify euery  
circumstance of it, I thinke I  
should both weary and amaze  
you. Suffice it therefore onely  
briefly to consider how con-  
tempt

*sincere love unto Christ.* 29

tempt offered to Christ and his Gospel reflects vpon all the Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

For the Father, whosoever sets light by his Sonne doth most grossly vnderalue both his wisdom and his goodness.

1. Against the Wisdom of the Father.

For his wisdom. The contriving of mans redemption by the death of his Sonne in the fulnesse of time is, so farre as is reuealed to vs, the master-piece & chiefe plot (with reuerence bee it spoken) which hath been from all eternity thought on by that infinite boundlesse wisdom of God blessed for euer; whereby hee purposed to get himselfe farre more glory then hee did by the creation of the world, when by a deliuerance so superlatively admirable hee should both saue mankind, and

God intended to get him more glory by the redemption; then the creation of mankind.

astonish

30 *The triall of a Christians*

astonish it. This is that for which the Gospell is so often called *the wisdom of God unto saluation*. This is that mystery of Godlynesse which is great *ὁμολογούμενος* by the confession of all without controuersy 1 Tim. 3. 16. This is that illustrious mystery of saluation which the Prophets enquired after, and searched diligently with the Angels to looke into 1 Pet. 1. 10. 12. Lastly this is that *πλουτομαθῶσα* that wisdom of God which hath such curious variety in it Ephes. 4. 10. Well then to come to the point when the time is come (as it is come to vs, who liue in this blessed noone-tide of the Gospell) that God reueales to any man this astonishing mystery of his infinite wisdom, when hee pleaseth to shew any man how admirably hee hath contriued his  
salua-

saluation for him, by sending his own sonne to satisfy his iustice, and therefore expects abundance of glory by it: if that man now a base varlet, created by God that hee might applaud his lesser works of creation, shall behaue himselfe so stupidly, that hee, forsooth, can scarce haue patience to take a full view of his Sonne, if hee can espie no such arte in the contriuanee as may rauish him, no such wonders as may withdraw his minde from those bawbles, about which it was before busied, O beloued, this is an indignity to the glorious wisdom of God the Father, beyond all expression of mortall eloquence.

2. For his goodnesse and mercy. God the Father from euerlasting beholding mankind in the vgly masse of corruption, through

2. Against the goodnesse and mercy of the Father.

32 *The triall of a Christians*

through their owne wilfull rebellion knew he must bee iust, and yet desired to bee mercifull. And when nothing might make these two stand together, but satisfaction from one as infinite as himselfe, *that he might commend his loue to vs*, as the Apostle speakes Rom. 3. 8. hee resolved not to spare *in ayme the sonne of his Loue* as hee is called by a significant Hebraisme, Col: 1. v. 13. *but to send him in similitude of sinnefull flesh*; to vndergoe that heavy businesse for vs, presuming as it is in the parable that howsoeuer his other messengers had fared but ill in the world, yet his Sonne the heire should bee entertained with reuerence. O then can wee imagine with what hellish contempt they euen desye the loue of God towards them, who look strangely

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 33

ly vpon his Sonne, who behaue themselves towards him, as if his Father had sent him in a needles errand into the world, or as if there needed not to haue beene all this care taken for them.

2. In the next place it would bee an endlesse businesse to rehearse the indignities which are offered to the second person in Trinity Christ himselfe by such as call him Lord, Lord, but yet deale not honestly with him in their hearts. *Greater loue then this hath no man, then that hee lay downe his life for his friend* saith our Sauour *Ioh. 15. 13.* True Lord, it's the greatest loue that one friend can shew another, but yet thy loue was greater vnto vs in that thou laydest down thy life *for thy enemies*, yea in that thou vouchsafedst for

2. Against the Sonne because his death and passion is vilified and cōtemned.

C

our

### 34 The triall of a Christians

our laces to take such a life  
 which thou mightst lay down.  
 Consider in briefe I beseech  
 you, how the Sonne of God  
 out of meere obedience vnto  
 his Father and compassion vn-  
 to vs rebellious wormes *en-  
 emptied himselfe of the lustre  
 of his Deity, and in the forme of  
 a servant humbled himselfe to  
 the death even the most paine-  
 full, and shamefull death of the  
 Crosse Phil. 2. 8.* Peruse the  
 history of his passion, yea of his  
 whole life which was little bet-  
 ter then a passion, obserue how  
 thoroughly the sad predictions  
 of a despised life and ignomini-  
 ous death *Isa. 53.* were ful-  
 filled in him, how in euery  
 point hee was made *isch enac-  
 es both a man of sorrowes,* draw  
 into a Catalogue the rude dis-  
 courtesies, churlish affronts, the  
 revilings, buffetings, spittings,  
 torments,

The bitter-  
 nesse of  
 Christs  
 Passion.



torments, agonies and the contradictions of sinners all along (that is) of sinnefull daytises which hee indured with patience. Lastly remember that all this befell him onely because *the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of vs all* Isa. 53. 6. where the Hebrew phrase is elegantly significant, *hiphgiab, he hath made the iniquity of vs all to meet, on him*, as our translators haue rightly expressed it in the margent. Remember still I say that all this was but what wee had deserved and therefore we may well suppose him with pitifull moanes crying out vnto vs vpon the Crosse in the mouing language of Ierusalem Lam: 1. 12. *Is it nothing to all you that passe by; behold and see if there bee any sorrow like vnto my sorrow.* Now beloved whosoever hee bee that hath read

36 *The triall of a Christians*

or heard all these things so punctually set downe in the Gospell that hee hath had *his saviour* ~~en~~ crucified before his eyes, whosoever is conceited and he beleeues this history and yet cannot bleed within or weepe without for his sinnes which were the cause of it, but can bee moved to more tender passions by a Tragicke fable created by the braine of a Poet cannot sympathise with his Saviour in that passion which should haue beene his, cannot by his serious cōpunction share with him in those agonies which should haue been all his owne, cannot take these mercies so deeply to heart as with the earnest pangs of yerning affections to desire *to bee crucified with Christ* as *S. Paul* speakes of himselfe *Gal. 2. 20. and to line the rest of his life in the flesh* by

Christ is  
more tor-  
mented by  
our ingra-  
titude then  
hee was by  
his passion.

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 37

*by the faith of the Sonne of God ;  
who loued him and gaue himselfe  
for him , questionlesse that man  
offers his Sauour the most cut-  
ting iniury , and does him the  
most villanous spight that it's  
possible for a mortall wretch  
to offer vnto the Lord of Glo-  
ry. That mans ingratitude is  
more painefull vnto Christ Ie-  
sus then all the thornes were in  
his head, and wounds him more  
deepely then the nayles did his  
hands and feete ; and therefore  
wee cannot imagine a lighter  
curse then *Anathema Maran-  
atha* to bee due vnto him. For  
by his sottish neglect of that  
death of which his sins aswel as  
any mans else were a cause , he  
becomes guilty of the murther  
of the Sonne of God , yea one  
of those *οἱ ἀνὰ σαρφῆς ἰαυτοῖς* ,  
*ὁβυ ἰαυτοῖς* , I vnderstand *τὸ πρ.*  
*ἰαυτοῖς* and English it ; *who cruci-*  
*fie**

38 The triall of a Christians

cise as much as in themselves the  
sonne of God. *Agdnyuan*  
auon and expose him like a ma-  
les labour to publique shame.  
Heb. 6. 6.

3. Against  
the holy  
Ghost be-  
cause his  
labour for  
loue to  
Christ is in  
vaine.

3. Lastly whosoever in-  
structed in the Gospell doth  
not in earnest loue Christ Iesus  
hee vexes & grieues the third  
person in Trinity the Holy  
spirit, whose chiefe businesse  
here below is to worke our  
our hearts vnto the loue of  
Christ, and as I said before to  
solicite the match betweene  
him and our soules. And this is  
one reason why our saviour be-  
ing to leaue this world,  
speakes so much in Saint Iohn  
of what the comforter should  
doe for him after his depar-  
ture. *He shall testify of me Iohn*  
*13. He shall glorify mee 16. 14.*  
Whosoever therefore makes  
the Holy spirit to labour in  
vaine

*Sincere love vnto Christ* 39

vaine not suffering his perswa-  
sions to make any impressions  
vpon his heart, or to get thence  
any glory for him whose agent  
hee is but thinks hee does  
Christ Iesus kindnesse enough  
in that he suffers himselfe to be  
called a Christian rather then  
a Jew or a Mahumetan, or Pro-  
testant rather then a Papist. In  
what a fit of discontent, in  
what a chafe (may we thinke)  
doth that man send or rather  
drive away the spirit of  
Grace. All that I haue said in  
this second consideration is  
comprised in that terrifying  
place *Hebr. 10. 28. 29*, which  
I know is there applyed vnto  
Apostates, but wee must note  
that all hypocrites are Apo-  
states in Gods sight, and there-  
fore what wee may apply vn-  
to an Apostate in particular,  
because hee discouers the rot-

C 4. tennesse.

40 The triall of a Christians

tennesse of his heart in the sight of men, wee may apply vnto hypocrites in generall because there is in them the same euill heart of vnbeliefe though wee cannot so particularly smell them out: the words are. *Hee that despised Moses Law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment suppose yee, shall hee be thought worthy, who hath troden under foote the sonne of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified Koldr (as the blood of a common man, or a malefactor not as the blood of a sacrifice) and hath done despight vnto the spirit of grace.*

*Applic.* You see the fearefully accursed estate of those professors of Christianity who deale falsely with their Savi-

our.

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 41

our, and loue him not at the heart, you see vpon what slippery tearmes wee stand betwene the greatest curses, and the greatest blessings. If wee haue indeed made Christ Iesus our portion, if wee haue beene so feelingly affected with his favours towards vs that now with the Spouse in the Canticles *wee are even sicke with loue of him.* If as the Apostle prayes for the Ephesians, *Wee are so rooted and grounded in loue that we can bring good proofes,* that with a constant resolution we preferre the intellectuall pleasures which issue from his reconciled countenance before whatsoeuer else is most pretious and deare vnto vs, O then we may hugge our selues as men over-joyed, for as sure as God is God, all his rich promises in Christ Ie-

1 The benefit of embracing Christ and his Gospel.

sus

42. *The trial of a Christians*

his shall be yea and Amen vnto vs. But on the contrary if those heavenly raptures and glorious trances of sweetest entercourse betweene Christ and our soules sound as Phantastique dreames & harsh Paradoxes vnto vs, if wee stupidly content our selues with an empty profession of his name and heartlesse conformity vnto the outward garb of the Gospell, never strining either to expresse or to feele the inward power of it, if wee goe on in a heavy, sluggish dull manner, never retiring vnto our Saviour but in some melancholy moodes which wee are quickly weary of, blindly presuming of much from him, and caring not how little hee hath from vs: O then we most grossely delude our selues: for the curse of curses *Anathema*

2. The danger of a meere outward profession of Christs Gospell.

*Maran*



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 43

*Maran-atha* doth most certainly belong vnto vs, I presume almost there is not any man in this assembly but would thinke himselfe much wronged if one should seriously tell him hee did not loue Christ Iesus: Not loue Christ? Why we imagine wee all doe it naturally, wee take it as the custome of the country to say so, It is not my purpose to dishearten any man, would to God that the least sparke of loue vnto Christ in any mans heart here were a glorious flame. But yet I would haue no man to deceiue himselfe in this point then which nothing more easy, nothing more dangerous: God is not mocked, he requireth truth in the inward parts and the exactest kinde of loue that can be imagined. Doe you thinke beloued but that the

44. *The triall of a Christians*

the Iewes in our Saviours time were confidently perswaded that they loued God: they persecuted our Saviour indeed because they could not apprehend him to be the sonne of God, but for God himselfe they made full account that they, and none but they loued him aright. Here was, I dare say, as strong a perswasion of loue to God, if confidence would beare out the matter as in the greater part of Christians of their loue vnto Christ. But behold how miserably they were deceaued *Joh. 5. 42.* our Saviour expressly tels them, *But I know you that ye haue not the loue of God in you.* The like grosse deceit of the Iewes may be observed in the same chapter about their loue vnto *Moses*, why they were not and naile for *Moses*. The  
**LAW.**

It is dangerous to be confident in a customary loue to God.

*sincere loue vnto Christ. 45*

Law and name of *Moses* was the glory of their nation for which no doubt but many if they had beene put to it would resolutely haue lost their liues in our Saviours time as their ancestors had done before or their posterity since, so that one would haue thought hee might haue sworne they loued *Moses*, but yet when the matter comes to scanning you shall finde there was no such matter, for indeed they were so false hearted to *Moses* that at the last day hee shall bee their chiefe accuser, witnesse our Saviour verie 45. *There is one that accuseth you in whom yee trust*, that is, on whom yee presume, for had you belieued *Moses* &c. Lastly, to rouse vs out of the slumber of our presumption, let vs take notice of one example more taken out of  
Mat.

46 The triall of a Christians

Mat. 7. 22. Luc. 13. 26. where  
wereade, that many shall come  
at the last day vnto Christ, pre-  
suming vpon their familiarity  
with him, some telling him  
they had eaten and dranke in  
his presence, some expostulating  
with him, Lord haue we not  
prophefied in thy name, cast out  
diuells, and done many wonder-  
full workes. Would you ima-  
gine all this could bee without  
great loue vnto Christ. O how  
confident should we be if we  
had such evidence of our vnion  
with him. How safe should  
we thinke our selues, could we  
challenge acquaintance with  
him vpon the same termes  
when he shall come in his glo-  
ry to iudgement. But yet you  
see all this might doe vs no  
good, seeing our Saviour will  
send many such packing with  
an angry protestation that hee  
knowes

*sincere loue vnto Christ* 47

*knowes them not*, and if he will not know them, you may bee sure they were such as had not for all these flourishes dealt kindly and louingly, with him.

Wherefore beloved, you see how much it concernes vs to pause a while on this matter.

We all thinke we loue Christ Iesus: it were well if thinking would serue the turne, but wee see that many, who thought as confidently as wee, and perhaps vpon better grounds, shall then perceaue themselues mistaken, when it shall be too late to remedy it.

O then let vs not venture our selues vpon such groundlesse surmises, but while wee haue time to make all sure. Let vs make it a businesse to settle the estate of our soules which hang vpon such nicc points, let not our shallow presumptuous con-

48 *The triall of a Christians*

concepts of our loue to Christ, let not the lazinesse and vn-  
towardnesse of our flesh hin-  
der vs from a speedy, impar-  
tiall, industrious examination  
of our hearts, whether they  
haue indeed the loue of Christ  
in them or no.

The infal-  
libe notes  
of reall  
loue vnto  
Christ.

If vpon due enquiry wee  
finde in our selues the true  
ground of loue vnto our Savi-  
our, to wit. a tender affectio-  
nate apprehension of our infi-  
nite deserued miseries, and his  
infinite vnderdeserued mercies,  
if wee feele the fruits of it a  
constant, even, vniuersall re-  
solution to please him in all  
things, at all times, in all com-  
panies, a disesteeme of what-  
soever is honourable or plea-  
sant in the world in compari-  
son of his favour, a continuall  
hunger and thirst after a neerer  
and more sensible communi-

on with him, I say if vpon exact triall thou finde in thy selfe these infallible notes of reall loue vnto thy Saviour, then I hope it will not repent thee of thy labour. For now thou knowest vpon what ground thou standest, now thy ioy may bee full, assuring thy selfe that thou shalt haue a confidence which shall not deceiue thee before thy Saviour at his appearing. Contrariwise if when thou entrest into thy heart, thou findest no sacred fire vpon the Hearth but all cold and vncomfortable, if thou hast not yet beene acquainted with those prickings of heart and affrightments of conscience for thy sinnes, which vsually put poore humbled soules into those vehement fits of loue vnto our Saviour,

50 *The triall of a Christians*

uour, If thou canst giue no reason of thy supposed loue vnto Christ from any thing that thou hast felt in thy selfe but onely frō what other men say, frō the Lawes & customes of the place where thou art a subiect, then thou findest thy selfe but in an vnhappy case; yet thou art happy in this that thou knowest the worst of thy selfe, and maist seeke out betimes for an effectuall remedy. If this bee thy case consider seriously that thou art yet vnder the heavy curse in my Text, and therefore impatient of this accursed estate, recollect thy selfe and call a speedy assembly of thy best wits, and then bethinke thy selfe that Christianity is no ludicrous, or ielting matter, that the professiō of Christ the most serious businesse in the world, that therefore questionlesse there



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 51

is a great deale more in it, then the formalities of coming to Church, carrying a bible, hearing a sermon, that without doubt Christ requires a reall inward disposition of the soule which should season all these complements and make them acceptable.

3. Consider in the next place the summe and scope of Christianity which is onely to shew how miserable thou art by sin, and how happy thou mayst bee in Christ. When thou art come thus farre, set the looking-glasse of the Law before thee and terrify thy selfe with the ugly deformities and loathsome staines of thy soule through the guilt of sinne, then turne vnto the Gospell and consider how Christ Iesus out of the abundance of his loue with which hee loued thee being his enemy,

The summe  
and scope  
of Christi-  
anity.

52. *The triall of a Christians*

my, shed his dearest blood to wash away these stains from thy soule as very a wretch as thou art as well as any man else.

Prayer the  
best armor  
of a Chri-  
stian.

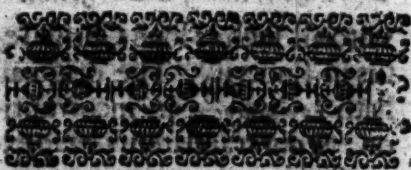
4. Lastly, having thy soule attentiuely fixed vpon this, be- take thy selfe to earnest prayer, & with strong cries & groanes importune the spirit of grace to enlighten the eyes of thy vnderstanding, *that thou maist bee able to comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth, length, and height, and depth, and to know the loue of Christ, which passeth knowledge, Eph. 3. 19.* Doe this from thy heart, and continue in it a while with an eager patience, and then I dare bee bold to say that thou shalt feele a strange alteration in thy selfe, then shalt thou feele *ἡ χάρις αὐτῆς πλεονεξῶν* not one simple commotion in thy

thy soule but an assembly and  
throng of passions, then shalt  
thou bee acquainted with those  
scalding affections to Christ Ie-  
sus which holy men haue felt  
in all ages and strined to ex-  
presse in their soliloquies but  
could not, yea the greater sinner  
thou hast beene the more wilt  
thou with *M A R I E Luc. 7.*  
lay about thee with teares of  
sorrow, and teares of ioy, and  
in a holy kinde of distraction  
*strive to loue much because  
much is forgiven thee.* Lastly  
thou wilt plainly see how vil-  
lanously hitherto thou hast dis-  
sembled with thy Sauour, and  
what a deale of Angelicall co-  
fort thou hast lost by being a  
stranger vnto him, and hauing  
once after some cloudy scuds of  
penitent sadnes recovered the  
light, thou wilt reioyce as the  
wise men when they recovered  
the light.

54 *The triall of a Christians*

light of the starre with excec-  
great ioy and follow it through  
thicke and thinne ; through  
all difficulties and oppositions  
whatsoeuer til thou shalt come  
to see him as he is in incompre-  
hensible splendor amongst in-  
finite millions of glorified Saints  
and Angels ; To whom with  
the Father and blessed Spirit  
the three glorious persons and  
one most infinite Deity bee as-  
cribed all honour , power ,  
might, maiestie and dominion  
now and for ever, Amen.

**F I N I S.**



EPHES. 6. V. 24.

*Grace bee with all them that  
love our Lord Iesus Christ  
in sincerity.*

**N**OR to mispend a-  
ny good time in a  
needlesse preface,  
my text is part of  
the farewell close  
of an heavenly Epistle, where-  
in the composer of it in the so-  
lemne forme of a benediction  
wisheth Grace (that is) all  
those precious mercies and glo-  
rious benefits which flow from  
the grace and favour of God,  
vnto

2 *The triall of a Christians*

vnto all such as loue Christ Iesus in sincerity. The originall hath *ἀφθαρσία* in incorruption, as our translatours haue expressed it in the margent, the sense is all one, for to loue Christ in sincerity, is to embrace him intirely without any rottenesse of heart, without any vnfoundnesse of affections, without any mixture of hypocrisie. The Greeke Scholiast conceived the Apostle by the word *ἀφθαρσία* to haue required not so much the sincerity, as perpetuity of loue vnto Christ in those whom he blesses, and therefore hee expoundeth it by the aduerb *ἀφθάρως*, vnderstanding it not so much of a pure vncorrupt, as of a constant incorruptible loue, which yet alwayes presupposeth the other. I confesse the word may very well fit vnder this interpretation

pretation, but yet I preferre the former before it, and both a great deale before *Beza's* (with due reuerence vnto so incomparable a man) who hath turned all quite another way, referring *ἐν ἀποδοίᾳ* not to loue but to grace, and taking it for *ἐν ἀποδοίᾳ ad immortalitatem*, as if the sense were to be, Grace bee with all them which loue Christ Iesus, vntill they come or to bring them vnto immortality. The construction of the word which our translatours haue made choyce of, hee reiects because hee could not remember, that *ἀποδοίᾳ* had any where that signification, I confesse it's a very rare one, and for that reason I haue insisted vpon it, being perhaps not to bee found in the new Testament, but if any man please to looke in the 2. to *Tit. v. 7.* hee

D

shall

4 *The triall of a Christians*

shall there find the word, and hardly capable of any other construction. *Beza* indeed suspecting that it crept out of the margent into the text, hath there left it quite out, which I wonder at, seeing himselfe confesses that hee found it in the ancient Greeke Copies, wherefore I suppose without any preiudice to the discourse which I shall build vpon this scripture I may proceed confidently according to our owne translation especially seeing I know some six more of good note which all read either in, or with sincerity: In brieft then, the meaning of my text is this, Let the fauour of God & al those blessings which issue from it, rest vpon those who doe not by groundlesse presumptiōs flatter themselues or counterfeite appearance perswade



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 5

swade others that they loue Christ Iesus, but doe in very deed & good earnest loue him with all their hearts, and with all their soules. Or thus, Let the gracious promises of God in Christ be fulfilled vpon them and them onely, who embrace and obey his Gospell with sound and honest hearts, who are true Christians in whom is no guile. For wee must note that as the whole Law of God *ἀνακεφαλαιῶται* as the Apostle speakes, is summarily comprised in the word Loue, Loue to our neighbour, including all the the duties of the second table, and loue to God the duties of both, though more immediatly those of the first, euen so our loue vnto Christ compriseth all the duties, all the respect and homage which wee owe vnto him and his Gospell.

## 6 The triall of a Christians

It is not my purpose to dismember my text by the vntoward curiosity of a diuision : I haue not as yet learned that piece of methode. The reasons inducing mee to the choyce of this Scripture arose from a serious consideration of the spirituall estate of these times. Wee liue in an age of most peremptory presumption, and we may obserue that our presumption of the end is upheld by our presumption of the meanes. No man but thinkes hee shall bee saued, and why? because euery man thinkes himselfe to bee a Christian, to bee one that loues Christ, which to speake more rationally is but our presumption; for it is no presumption for a man to belieue that hee shall bee saued vnlesse hee bee vnassured of this supposition that hee is a Christian. In a word, whereasthere is a two-fold

in this age  
euery one  
presumes  
he shall be  
saued onely  
because he  
thinkes  
himselfe to  
be a Chri-  
tian and  
one that  
loues  
Christ.

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 7

fold grace of God : his promi-  
sing and rewarding grace, and  
then his qualifying or sanctify-  
ing grace, we presume vpon  
that because wee presume  
vpon this, wee make full ac-  
count of his mercies and pro-  
mises, because wee make no  
question of those holy qualifica-  
tions in our selues which dis-  
pose vs to belicue in him and  
to loue him. Now then seeing  
wee all suppose that the euer-  
lasting fauours of God doe most  
vnfallibly appertaine vnto all  
and none but such as loue Christ  
Iesus, 2. that our selues are all  
such, the first supposall beeing  
cleere out of my text, all our  
care must bee for the second,  
to see that we are not mistaken  
in our account of our selues.

The triall of all, lies in this sin-  
cerity, whether we are indeed  
those men in respect of Christ

D 3.

which

### 8 *The triall of a Christians*

which wee verily thinke our  
 helues to bee. That therefore I  
 may acquaint you both with  
 the necessity and methode of  
 this triall, that I might shew  
 you both what need wee haue  
 to examine the sincerity of our  
 loue vnto Christ and Christia-  
 nity, and after what manner we  
 ought to goe about, that if it  
 may please the opener and tur-  
 ner of hearts to effect anything  
 by so contemptible an instru-  
 ment, I may awake some one  
 out of that pleasant, but deadly  
 slumber which possesseth thou-  
 sands in this land; and cause  
 him to looke better to his stand-

The diuifi-  
 on is into  
 three most  
 considera-  
 ble points  
 of our loue  
 vnto  
 Christ.

ing. I haue reso'ued by the assi-  
 stance of the spirit at seuerall  
 opportunities to discourse vnto  
 you of three generall heads, or  
 most considerable points in our  
 loue vnto Christ; 1. the ground  
 or foundation of our loue vnto  
 Christ;

Christ; the reasons wherefore wee are Christians. 2. the degree or intention of our loue vnto Christ; how much wee ought to loue him, or in what pitch of resolution to resigne our selues vnto him. 3. the effects and operations of our loue vnto him, or the speciall fruites of our sincerity. In my discourse of the ground of our loue vnto Christ I haue proposed vnto my selfe this methode

1. I will discouer two deceivable insufficiēt grounds which at this day betray thousands vnto perdition, causing them to fall short of those glorious hopes which were built vpon them. 2. I will lay open the true ground & proper originall from whence all sincere affection vnto Christ ariseth. The first of those deceivable grounds, is custome, the discouering of which

10 *The triall of a Christians*

which will take vp as much time as your patience will bee willing to allow me at once.

The fall of man hath not so farre worne out of his heart the impressions of a Deity, and the engrafted notions of religion, but that we all bring into the world with vs those restless instincts, and importunate impulsions which will not suffer vs to bee at quiet vntill we are initiated into some Religion or other, The Ancient Epicures though it were the scope of their damned profession to bee altogether irreligious, and the most contenting perfectiō they could proiect vnto themselves, yet as wee may perceiue by such writings as they haue left vs they could neuer fully attaine vnto it, but in spite of their affected Atheisme they were forced to betray many

The very Epicures felt often the gripes of conscience,

shrewd

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 11

shrewd grudgings and terrible  
gripes of naturall conscience.

And though in the demiall of  
diuine prouidence vpon the  
supposall of which depends all  
religion, they put a good face  
vpon it, and seeme to laugh at

the matter, yet wee may per-  
ceine they were still gawled

with that *formido oppositi* and  
by those engraued principles

were euer and anon stung to  
reall feare of that truth which

they would faine haue mocked  
out of the world either as an

ancient inuention of policy to  
keepe men in awe, or as an in-

ueterate flauery of vulgar igno-  
rance. The same inbred seedes

of religion by which it pleaseth  
God to force a manifestation of

himselſe euen vpon those who  
would faine haue no notice of

him, and in the most reprobate  
mindes to make Atheisme ra-

D. 5. ther

12 *The triall of a Christians*

ther a will then an opinion, after so many successions of ages are no whit decayed, but continue still as stirring and active in the hearts of men as ever they were since they received that unhappy crush by the first transgression. For the Creator of all things as the Psalmist tells vs Psal. 33. 15. fashioneth the hearts of all men alike, the word is *כִּלְכִּל*, which signifies together at once, intimating that the hearts of all men though separated from one another by neuer so vast a gulfe of time or place, are as exactly alike in respect of their originall inclinations, as if they had beene all moulded at the same time. The worship of a God then, some kinde of religion is necessary vnto vs, wee cannot shift it off: but now the propensitions of nature being blind and

The necessity of a Religion.

According to the custom of the country so is our worship.

con-



confused, and there being a various multiplicity of religions in the world, here ordinarily step in the lawes and customes of the countrey, into which the wombe of nature first empties vs, which shape our generall inclinations either to worship the true God, or this or that I-doll, and the true God after this or that manner. Looke abroad into the world and obserue the swarmes of diuers & contrary religions which either fill places apart by themselves or are promiscuously exercised amongst one another, & you shall perceiue them to bee nothing but the naturall instincts of religion in generall, speciflicated into diuerse formes and fashions by birth and education. For albeit there may bee many occasions of, and difficulties in the first bringing in  
of

# 14 The triall of a Christians

of a religion into a countrey, yet after it hath once by countenance from supreme authoritie and other plaufibilities insinuated it selfe into the acceptance and approbation of the multitude, it thenceforth becomes *malum ad bonum* to vlc St Peters word, and with an easie descent runnes downe the streame of succession, being deliuered from Father to Son as naturally, as the proper language, manner of diet, fashion of apparell, or any other customes of the countrey.

There is  
but one  
true religi-  
on by the  
which true  
happinesse  
is attained.

What true  
Religion is,

Now amongst so many religions as in severall parts of the world are by custome conveyed and passed from one to another wee suppose there is but one which wee may dare to trust for our happinesse, but one that can certainly doe our foules that good which most of them

them would seem to promise.  
Neither will wee seeme to  
doubt but that this one sauing  
religion is that which consists  
in the knowledge of the only  
true God, and whom hee hath  
sent Iesus Christ; and there-  
fore we will all seeme to bee  
much in loue with this heave-  
ly profession before any other  
whatsoever. If then wee will  
be sure not to cosen our selues  
in these perswasions, not to o-  
ver-reckon our selues in our  
loue vnto Christ and his Go-  
spell, here is a maine businesse  
for vs, punctually to enquire  
how we came by this loue and  
liking vnto Christ, vpon what  
motiue wee haue preferred  
this profession of Christ be-  
fore such a multitude of Reli-  
gions in the world. You know  
that no art or invention can  
force waters to mount aboue

The mo-  
tiues or rea-  
sons of our  
embracing  
of Christia-  
nity before  
all other  
their Religions.

16 *The triall of a Christians*

their spring head : in like manner , it's impossible that our affections vnto Christ should be more elevated, more heavenly and spirituall then the originall from whence they streame. If then being put to it by our selues or others we can think of no better reasons for our choice of Christianity then such as these, because we had the fortune to be born in a place where Christ onely was talked of, because we haue heard *Turkes, Jewes, and Papists* much spoken against, and were ever told that this is the best religion, because the King and Lawes haue banished all other Sects, and haue established this profession of Christ which we haue alwaies beene brought vp in, and could never see any harme in it, if such foolish, senselesse stuffe bee the best defence

*sincere love unto Christ.* 17

defence wee can make for our  
selues, it appeares too plainly  
that our religiō is nothing but  
those common reliques of na-  
turall instincts which I spoke  
of before, christned, as it were  
by humane lawes & customes,  
and that we are Christians up-  
on no waightrier inducements,  
then wee might haue beene  
*Pagans* or *Idolaters*. I tremble  
to speak it, if an *Indian* should  
bee demanded why hee wor-  
shipped the Diuell, changing  
only the circumstances hee  
might giue as sufficient rea-  
sons as these for his most feare-  
full and horrible Idolatry. But  
this example though it might  
square but too well to my pur-  
pose is too odious to be insisted  
vpon. Aske a common *Iew*  
why he blasphememes our bles-  
sed Saviour, why hee expects  
another *Messias*, a *Turke* why  
he

18 *The triall of a Christians*

he is circumcised, why he is so devoted to *Mahomet*; they will both in effect giue the very same reasons of their blasphemies and superstitions, which a common ignorant Christian will giue why hee is rather a Christian then a *Jew* or a *Turke*, justifie their damned hatred and detestation of Christ, by the same arguments, which cause him to professe speciall love and service vnto him. Nay you will say there is no Christian so barbarously ignorant but he may say more for himselfe then any of those vnbeleeuing misereants can, he hath heard the holy Scriptures read, beene made partakers of the blessed Sacraments he hopes to haue his sinnes forgiven him by Christ, & though hee bee not able to proue it by formall argumentation, hee knowes

*sincere love vnto Christ.* 19

knowes well enough that  
*Turkes* and all such as speake  
against Christ are accursed in-  
fidells. I thinke indeed there  
are not many Christians but  
may say so much and perhaps  
more, by wrote, and taking it  
vp vpon trust, but this is quite  
besides the purpose. For I doe  
not now question the Christi-  
an in the duties or opinions of  
his religion, but I cal vpon him  
for his speciall reasons which  
cause him to performe those  
duties, or embrace those opi-  
nions. He hath beene partaker  
of the blessed Sacraments, but  
what better reason can hee  
giue why these Sacraments  
can doe his soule good: then a  
*Turke* may, why his circum-  
cision should be beneficial vn-  
to him; hee hath heard the  
Scriptures read and expoun-  
ded, but what better reason  
can

20 *The triall of a Christians*

can he giue, why he supposeth  
the Scriptures to be the word  
of God, then the *Turke* will,  
why he is so confident that the  
*Alcoran* came downe imme-  
diatly from heaven, in that  
*laylatro-Hanzih*, as they call  
it, the night of demission; Last-  
ly, he stily conceits himselve  
to be one of the only true faith  
and all *Turkes* to be abhorred  
infidels, but what peculiar e-  
vidences hath hee that the  
*Turkes* are mistaken and not  
himselfe, seeing they are as co-  
fident on the other side that  
Christians are *Cafirouna*, Infid-  
els, as they tearme vs, & that  
themselves are the onely *Mo-*  
*slimina* or *Musulmans* (that  
is) right beleeuers? If then  
the Christians being pressed  
with these demands can pro-  
duce nothing from any super-  
naturall alteration which hee  
hath

לילתו  
הנזילה

כאפירונה

מס' יוסנא:



hath felt wrought in himselfe,  
if he be not able from spiritu-  
all selfe experience of that  
cutting convincing power of  
the Scriptures, and of those  
admirable vertues & comfor-  
table influences of the Sacra-  
ments, if he be yet altogether  
vnacquainted with those cele-  
stiall flashes, irradiations and  
inward testimonies of the spi-  
rit, which vse to put all these  
things out of questiō in soules  
truly Christianiz'd. Lastly, if  
for want of better Apologie  
he be forced to retire to those  
poore, dishonourable, imperti-  
nent, rather excuses then rea-  
sons of his religion, taken from  
the lawes and customes of his  
countrey, it is too too manifest  
that hee adheres vnto Christ  
vpon no better motiue then  
others blasphemie and perse-  
cute him, and even spit at the  
motion of his name.

To plead  
cūstome &  
law of the  
countrey is  
rather an  
excuse then  
a reason of  
ones religi-  
on.

**Obiect:** But here some may put in, howsoever such a Christian may be out-braved, yet that which he saies and thinkes is true: he is in the right though he cannot demonstrate like a Scholler how he came to it, & therefore hee is sure howsoever men may prate, to speed well enough.

**Answer.** No such matter, it is a very disputable case, whether such a one as liues and dies a Christian vpon custome, or a *Turke* be in the grosser error. This may seeme very harsh, but you may easily espie the truth of it if you please to remember, that both the assent of our vnderstandings, and choice of our wills may bee misguided into error two waies: either by assenting vnto, and approving that as true and good which in

Little difference betwixt a Christian & a *Turke*, if the former be so only vpon custome.

it.

ans *sincere loue vnto Christ* 23

ing it selfe is false and evill, or  
Christianly assenting vnto, or appro-  
bating that which is both true  
and good in it selfe, vpon  
a weak, incoherent, insu-  
fficient inducementes, I can-  
not stand to comment vpon  
this distinction, and it is so tri-  
viall that I conceaue it need  
not much to bee exemplified.  
Applied vnto my purpose it  
cleerely shewes the ignorant  
Christian not to bee a whit  
more in the right then the  
*Turk*. The object of his assent  
and loue is most right absolut-  
ly in it selfe because it is not  
an object vnto him for that  
truth and goodnesse by which  
it's distinguished from all o-  
ther objects, but for those co-  
mon corrupt grounds, which  
abstractly considered, equally  
encline the soule to any ob-  
ject, as well to the grossest er-  
rors

24 *The triall of a Christians*

rors as the purest truth, to the extreamest evil, as to the chiefest good. So that this comparison is like to light most heavily vpon the Christian, seeing the goodnesse of the object will not excuse or justifie, but rather shame and condemne him, who professing much loue vnto it, passeth by that which alone was louely in it.

The Christians case is the better, only by reason of the opportunities of correcting his error.

For the present indeed the Christians case is infinitely the better, because hee may with more ease correct his error, and hath all requisite opportunities to that purpose, but if he neglect to doe it hereafter, the *Turke* will get the better of him, whē at the day of judgement, he that hath died such a Christian, will bee glad to change places with him. In the meane time, there is not any difference in their errors discernable

discernable to reason, for this is certaine, that diversity of objects cannot put any difference in the assents, where the grounds are exactly the same, yea if some of the acutest moderne disputers haue rightly determined, that the assent vnto the premises, and the conclusion is but one and the same assent, being originally to those, and terminatiuely to this, I can scarce allow the difference to be so great. For then it skills not how false or true the conclusiō be absolutely in it selfe, but how strongly or weakly it's inferred out of it's premises, and therefore though one conclude an infallible truth, and another a monstrous falsehood out of the same faulty premises, the error of both is the same, if they assent vnto their conclusions vpon

## 26 *The triall of a Christians*

The ignorant Christians assent vnto the Gospell, & the Turkes to the Alcoran, proceed both vpon the same grounds.

vpon no other *medium* then this insufficiēt one, vpo which they both agree. For example, the principle vpon which the ignorant Christians assent vnto the Gospell stands, is this: That Religion which my Parents haue taught mee, my So-  
 veraigne commanded me, and the common cry of my country approued is surely the best. The *Turke* changing only the appropriating circumstances, supposeth likewise, that religion which his *Sultan*, Parents and Countrey men haue commended vnto him to bee questionlesse the best. Both then proceed vpon the same medium, and therefore though by the intervention of other casualties, the *Turke* bee cast vpon execrable blasphemies & impieties, and the Christian vpon heavenly and holy truths, their  
 error

error is directly the same, though more fortunate in one then in the other. And howsoever such a Christiā hath his assent & imaginary loue by lot of his birth and education, actually fixed vpon saving truths yet vntil he bethinke himselfe of more proper and solid reasons for his choice, he retaines still in his breast habitually and implicitly the seeds of all those hellish impostures, which by other men, in other places, haue beene entertained and swallowed vpon the same occasions. Suppose a Christian, who can make no better defence for his profession then such a one as I haue laboured to make him ashamed of, immediately after his birth in England had beene conveyed into Turkie, and there instead of Baptisme circumcised after

the Turkish manner, and there  
so cunningly trained vp in the  
Turkish superstition, that hee  
had no occasion giuen him to  
suspect himselfe not to haue  
beene borne a Turke: no quest-  
ion but he would haue bene as  
zealous there for the rascall  
Mahomet: as now being bred  
in England, he is for the blessed  
Lord of the world. And no  
marvel, for the very same oc-  
currences which haue made  
him a christiā here, must needs  
haue made him a Mahometan  
at Constantinople, seeing that  
whatsoever arguments drawn  
from lawes, customes, birth, e-  
ducatio, pleade here for Christ  
would there perswade as effe-  
ctually for Mahomet, Neither  
speake I this as if this would  
argue any notorious imperfe-  
ction in the man: for doubtles  
this would be any mans case:  
Suppose



Suppose any of those renowned Champions of Christ who Queene *Mary* sent to heaven in fiery Chariots, had beene nursed and brought vp amongst the Saracens, vnlesse God had vouchsafed them a miracle for their conversion, we cannot imagine but they would haue beene Saracens. Suppose the deuoutest Saint of God at this day breathing had beene trained vp at the feet of some Iewish Rabbin if we looke no higher then ordinary meanes, we must needs conceaue that with the hellish mallice of a Jew he would haue defied that blessed Sauour of his, whom now he worships day & night. I mentioned not that therefore to shew the weakenesse of the person, but of such reasons of his Christianity, as changing only the scene of his nati-

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uity and education, might haue  
made him hotter against it the  
now he is for it. So that the on-  
ly fundamentall reason why  
such a Christian is rather a  
Christian then a Iew, Turk, or  
Idolater, is because Christiani-  
ty bespoke him as soone as hee  
came into the world, and per-  
mitted not those madde super-  
stitions either to speake with  
him at all or not till it selfe had  
prevented them and gotten  
possessio. For we may obserue  
that albeit generally in the  
world error keepes truth out

A Formall of the soules of men by anti-  
Christian is cipation, damming vp all the  
a Christian passages by which shee should  
by educatio enter with base preconcepts  
only, & the and odious prejudices, yet in  
custome of some corners where diuine  
his country providence hath been pleased  
to allow truth an authorised,  
settled residency, it gets the  
state

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 31

start of errour and preuailes as much by prepossession here as errour doth in other places, beating that away with the same clamours and out-cries by which it selfe is elsewhere baffled. But this to speake more punctually is not a fight betweene truth and errour, though by the vndiscerning vulgar it be mistaken for it, but a kinde of blindfold combat betweene prejudice and prejudice, or of custome against custome. For in these cases though truth blocke vp errors way, and so keepe that from stealing into the soule, yet doth not she presently enter in her selfe, but stands, as it were, before the dore displaying her resplendent rarities and admirable perfections, and if for their sakes alone shee bee not earnestly invited to come in

32 *The triall of a Christians*

and importun'd to take vp her lodging there, she vouchsafeth not to enter but at last flings away in disdain. Men may imagine shee is gone in because they cannot heare of see heretic or superstition stirring within, but for certaine saving truth never presseeth into any soule vpon the bare aduantage of being the first commer, but for her owne singular worth shee lookes to be wooed, importuned, and with some violence haled in, as the blessedst guest that could possibly haue come first or last.

But here may some demand, if the summe of all this that hath beene spoken bee true, to wit, That our loue vnto Christ and his Gospell be not gotten by our birth and education amongst Christians, what benefit is it to bee borne within the

The benefit of our birth and education amongst Christians.

visible

visible Church? What prerogative to bee bred in the light of the Gospell? I answered, that it's an advantage of inestimable value, for which we all owe more thanks and praises vnto the Lord then our shallow braines and narrow hearts can possibly conceaue. But we must wisely consider the proper end and vse for which it hath pleased the Father of lights to afford vs this blessed priuiledge, which is not that it should bee a cause, but a meanes, not a ground but an occasion of our loue vnto his beloued Sonne. In our commo friendship we can easily distinguish betweene the contingent occasions of our acquaintance with a man, and the immediate reasons of our affectionate loue vnto him: those are accidentally offered fro with-

34 *The triall of a Christians*

out, these are some speciall excellencies apprehended by vs to bee inherent in the person we affect, those are but meanes to bring vs to the knowledge of these. Even so in our spirituall loue vnto Christ Iesus blessed for ever, the Lord hath grationally planted vs within the sound of the Gospell, giuen vs education in Christian rites and fashions, and provided vs the testimony of the Church to tell vs that there is such a Saviour come into the world, and to bring vs joyfull newes what vnvaluable treasures of mercy and glory hee hath brought with him to enrich all such as shall come vnto him, pinched with the sense of their spirituall poverty; These are the meanes appointed to giue vs notice of these, but these onely must bee the grounds

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 35

grounds of our affection vnto him.

To conclude this discourse, albeit our loue vnto Christ be gotten by our naturall birth & education, be nothing worth in it selfe, yet is it the ordinary roade which leades vs to the sight and sense of those transcendent perfections in him which will ravish vs with a more transcendent loue of him: Happy are we if that base vulgar loue be in time swallowed vp in a loue more celestially and diuine, if that which can doe our soules no good while we rest vpon it become a manuduction vnto that which will certainly make vs blessed. Had not the *Samaritans* beleeued at first vpon an insufficient ground, the alarm of the woman, they had not come to beleue vpon the true,

36 *The trial of a Christians*

their owne knowledge & experience. Had not the faithful soule which is now most sicke of a spiritual louse vnto her Saviour, first loued him vpon heare say and custome, she had never felt, in all probability, those heavenly trances and vntterable ravishments with which now she is transported. All that loue which wee profess vnto Christ betweene our first birth, and the first pangs of the second, is a loue arising only from nature and custome, & is tolerable in vs while wee are children, being not so properly an error as an introduction vnto truth. I say it's a hopefull preparation in children which are not yet come to that ripenesse of their naturall faculties that the ordinary means of grace, the preaching of the Gospell, may worke vpon

on



on them. But after they haue attained to maturity of reason and should beginne to haue *αισθητικη νοητικη* as the Apostle speakes, their senses exercised to discern betweene good and euill, if they proceed still in such childish conceits of Christ Iesus, & drowisie affections vnto him, as they sucked from their nurses breasts, their loue beginnes now to be grossely sinfull, and whensoever it shall please the Lord to thunder them out of that sleep of death, wherein now they enjoy some cōtenting dreames they must penitently bewaile it amongst the other sinnes of their vnregeneracy.

I haue done with my discovery of the false ground of loue vnto Christ, by naturall instincts of religion, restrained to Christianity by birth and education.

### 38 The triall of a Christians

ducation. Before I proceed to  
 an application of this discourse,  
 I will insist vpon some oppo-  
 site places of holy Scripture,  
 which will adde both light &  
 strength vnto the precedent  
 discourse, and I hope prepare  
 your hearts to the ensuing ap-  
 plication. And first wee haue  
 an excellent place, *Cant. 5. v. 9*  
 where the Spouse, that is the  
 faithfull soule, hath this inter-  
 rogatory doubled vnto her,  
*what is thy beloved more then a*  
*beloued;* מִדּוֹד מִדּוֹד *mah-*  
*dodek middod, what is thy belo-*  
*ued more then a beloued,* that is,  
 what transcendencies, what  
 singularities of alluring perfe-  
 ctions, are so peculiarly remar-  
 kable in that Saviour of them,  
 on whom thou art so strangely  
 enamoured, as if there were  
 nothing louely besides him?  
 But what hath the soule no-  
 thing

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 39

thing now to commend in her Saviour, but what might bee paraleld in some other? Yea, from that verse to the end of the Chapter, shee runnes on in a description of his rarities; a description so stuffed with the choicest delicacies of expression, that I am perswaded it cannot be matched out of any of those Poets which haue flowen highest in amorous inventions; I cannot stand to vnfold them vnto you: that which makes most to my purpose in it, is the superlatiue preeminence which shee giues him, v. 10. *Hee is the chiefeest*, or as it is more elegantly in the originall, *Hee is an ensigne bearer amongst ten thousand*, for so the word דגל Dagull, properly signifies, v. 16. *He is altogether louely*; מְתוּרָם כל cullo macha-maddim

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maddim, he is all entire, he is all  
composed of loues, wherevpo  
she concludes with a triumphant  
Epiphonema, This is my belo-  
ved, and this is my friend, o yee  
daughters of Ierusalem. A se-  
cond memorable place is Phil.  
I. v. 9, 10. S. Paul speakes  
thus, And this I pray that your  
loue, (to wit, to Christ and his  
Gospell) may abound yet more  
and more in knowledge, and in  
all iudgement, that you may ap-  
proue things that are excellent.  
that yee may bee sincere and  
without offence, till the day of  
Christ. The Apostle praying  
for the confirmation of their  
loue vnto the Gospell, and as  
an especiall meanes of that he  
praies, they may abound in all  
iudgement, by which they  
may bee able vpon good  
grounds to approue the reall  
excellencies of truth before  
the

Phil. I. v. 9.  
10.

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 41

the plausibilities of errors,  
that so they may be sincere in  
their loue vnto it, to which  
purpose also he praies for the  
Ephesians, that they may bee  
rooted and grounded in loue,

Ephes. 3. 17. A third conside-  
rable place is, 1. Cor. 12. 3.

1. Cor. 12.

Wherefore I giue you to vn- 3.

derstand, that no man speaking  
by the spirit of God calleth Je-  
sus accursed: and that no man

can say that Iesus is the Lord  
but by the Holy Ghost, that is,

no man can with the fiduciall  
assent of his heart, acknow-  
ledge Christ to bee the only

Lord, which he is to worship  
by the same impulsions, by

which another curses and blas-  
pheames him, but by such pe-

culiar motiues as are suggested  
and revealed vnto him by the

Holy Ghost.

There is no man in this as-

sembly

sembly.

42 The triall of a Christians  
sembly but would thinke it  
very strange, if one should tell  
him seriously, he could not say,  
no not so much as thinke, that  
Jesus is the Lord. But if hee  
thinke and say him to be a  
*mathema*, his saying will doe  
him no good, though he make  
it his only worke to reveale it  
as long as hee liues. The last  
place shall bee that eminent  
one in S. Peter, 1. 3. 15. *But  
sanctify the Lord in your  
hearts, and bee ready alwaies  
to giue an answer to every man  
that asketh you a reason of the  
hope that is in you, What rea-  
son? Such a one as may bee re-  
torted by those who question  
vs? Such a one as may perhaps  
make more against vs then for  
vs? Such a generall one as  
might bee giuen for any pre-  
sumption in the world? No.  
a reason from a cleere distinct  
know-*

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 43

knowledge of the peculiar grounds, and experimentall sense of those encouraging foretastes of our incorruptible hopes by the Gospell: which though it cannot convince such Hereticks and Infidells as examine vs, because the God of this world hath closed their eyes, yet it may strengthen vs to possesse our soules in patience, and to hold fast our confidence which hath such great recompences of reward in spight of all the terrours of Men or Diuels.

*Use 1.* To admonish every man here present with all speed and diligence to commune with his owne heart, & to examine whether he bee as yet come out of his customary loue vnto Christ into a spirituall, or no. Beloued, we are all confident that we loue Christ

Iesus

*Vse 1.* Is to examine your selues whether ye be come out of this customary loue vnto Christ, into a spirituall, or no.

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Iesus, and if one should in earnest tell vs wee did not loue him, we should take it as ill, and interpret it as if he told vs wee were damned. Seeing then all our glorious hopes of a better life are built vpon this supposition: that wee are the true disciples of Christ, as wee would not be called to after-reckonings at that solemne day of accounts, or haue a flaw found in our euidence, which should eternally dash our expectation, even then when wee should take possession, as wee would not haue our hopes to vanish in amazement, and confusion at that terrible day, when it shall bee too late to recall or rectify any thing which hath beene formerly amisse, as wee would not haue our confident conceits of Christs loue vnto vs, and



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 45

and ours vnto him giue vs the  
shippe at the houre of death,  
when wee should haue most  
vse of them, and leaue vs to  
a fearefull expectation of  
iudgement. Let vs, I say, if  
wee haue any regard of sense  
of these things deale ingenu-  
ously with our owne soules,  
and impartially examine what  
better ground wee haue for  
that supposition which vp-  
holds all our wellfare, then  
such as I haue demonstrated to  
bee miserably insufficient.  
Christians we are all by edu-  
cation, by country & custome,  
by conformity vnto lawes and  
fashions: but is this all? haue  
wee proceeded no farther?  
why this will advantage vs  
no more for heauen then that  
wee are Englishmen. All this  
is but the outside of Christia-  
nity. Christianity thrust vpon  
vs

46 *The triall of a Christians*

vs by our naturall birth before we were aware of it, and settled on faster by custome, and as it were rivited in while we perhaps never thought of it. What saith the Apostle 2. Romans, 28. *Hee is not a Jew which is one in respect outwardly.* What not he a Jew which is borne and bred a Jew? yea hee is a Jew in all outward visible respects whatsoever. But all these will giue him no title to those everlasting promises which are made vnto Abraham and his seed according to the faith. He is no Jew in respect of them. In like manner he is no Christian, who is but outwardly one: who slides insensibly to himselfe into the visible garbe of Christianity; by naturall generation. He only is a Jew, who is one *in respect inwardly* in the

secrets of his heart, and he only is a Christian, who hath bin made one by a second birth of his soule, invisible to others; but admirably sensible vnto himselfe, being borne not of bloud, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, as *S. Iohn* fully expresseth it, c. i. v. 13 Well the, if thou wouldst not be mistaken in thy selfe, if thou wouldst be ascertained whether or no thou lou'st Christianity vpon any other motiues then such as nature and custome may suggest. First of all looke backe vpon the estate of thy soule ever since thou hast beene able to remember. Reflecting thus vpon so much of thy life as is gone, canst thou not remember a time wherein thy selfe being iudge, thou didst but dissemble with thy  
Saviour

48 *The triall of a Christians*

Saviour, when thou thoughtst of him but very seldome, and then but perfunctorily, without any heat of affections, when thou tookest not much to heart any thing hee hath done for thee, when thou tookest no conscionable care to liue vnto him, because hee had died for thee. Reflecting thus vpon the time past, canst thou not discerne but that thy loue vnto Christ hath beene spun out in an even thread even from the cradle vntill now, but that the pulse of thy affections vnto him hath alwaies beaten much after the same manner, without any notable variation. In a word canst thou not remember but that thou hast loued him alwaies as well, if not better, then thou hast in the latter time of thy life past. I say if  
the

the case be thus with thee, its a thousand to one but thou lovest him only vpon that deceivable ground which I haue laboured to discover.

To direct a little farther in this examination. Suppose the winde which now sits in thy backe, and kindly blowes thee on towards Christ, should turne vpon a sudden and furiously bluster in thy face. Suppose those lawes and customes which hitherto haue encouraged thee to proceed in Chri-

stianity, should command thee backe againe, and tell thee they were mistaken: suppose all the men thou knowest or hearest of, should change the fashion of their religion, and leaue thee as much alone, as *Elias* once thought himselfe to haue beene: and holy *Anthony* was when hee held

The backe  
sliding of  
others can-  
not seduce  
the sound  
Christian.

50 *The triall of a Christians*

vpagainst a world of *Arrians*;  
 I say if the *to vmprey & iudicious*  
 that special excellency of the  
 knowledge of Christ, which  
 made *S. Paul* to count all  
 things dung, that hee might  
 winne Christ, hath not furni-  
 shed thee with vnanswerable  
 reasons, why these supposalls  
 should not pull thee backe, its  
 a plaine case, that only the op-  
 posite encouragements let  
 thee forward. To bee brieft,  
 art thou not sure that thou hast  
 such speciall peculiar reasons  
 for thy religion as could not  
 haue suffered it, much lesse  
 haue caused thee vpon any  
 supposalls to haue beene of any  
 other. Hast thou not with an  
 inlightned vnderstanding e-  
 spied in Christ Iesus those  
 vnparallel'd transcendencies  
 which put an infinitely vast  
 difference betweene him and  
 those

those many Antichrists in the world. Lastly, hast thou not at some time or other, in some measure had thy conscience convicted of sinne, revived with such gracious influences distilling from his lovely countenance, and refreshed with such words of eternall life from him, as thou knowest (goe whether thou wilt) cannot be expected from any one else. If thy heart answer no to these interrogatories, assure thy selfe thou knowest not yet what this meanes to loue Christ, I should but flatter thee to tell thee thou 'art a Christian, yea I should in some sort mocke thee, by giuing thee a glorious title, which if thou continue as thou art, will no way benefit thee, yea it will not only keepe thee out of heaven, but sinke thee dee-

52 *The triall of a Christians*  
per into Hell. Giue glory vnto  
to God that thou liuest in a  
time and place where thou  
hast all encouragements, op-  
portunities, invitations to bee  
more entirely acquainted  
with thy Saviour, and to grow  
as intimate with him, as any  
man else, but for the present  
be content to consider that thy  
loue of him hitherto hath bin  
built vpon a rotten foundati-  
on; giue no rest vnto thy selfe,  
vntill thou hast learned to loue  
thy Saviour vpon such induce-  
ments as he would haue thee,  
even because hee hath loued  
thee. Giue not over importun-  
ing the spirit of grace to direct  
thy heart into the loue of God,  
and into the patient waiting  
for Christ, as the Apostle di-  
uinely prayes for the Thess. 2.  
Ep. 3. 5. Giue not over I say,  
vntill thou hast attained vnto  
all



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 53

all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, as the same Apostle sweetly prays for the Colossians 2. 2.

*Vse 2.* Let me bespeake all such, as by the tender mercies of God melting their hearts, haue beene made partakers of the heavenly calling, and begotten againe vnto a liuely hope, let me I say, if there be, any consolation in Christ, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, let me beseech them to take two things deeply to heart. First, the infinite dishonour which is done vnto Christ, the author and finisher of our faith by the customary profession of his glorious name and Gospell in this kingdome. It's about

*Vse 2.* those that are made partakers of the heavenly calling take two things to heart.

1. The infinite dishonour that is done vnto Christ by the customary profession of his glorious name and Gospell.

54 *The triall of a Christians*

three score yeares since the  
Saviour of the world hath  
vouchsafed after a most espe-  
ciall manner to reside amongst  
vs early and late, to call and  
cry vnto vs, to take notice  
what need we haue of him, to  
bethinke our selues of our infi-  
nite wants, which none but  
hee can supply, counselling vs  
as he did the Church of *Laod-  
dicea* to buy of him gold tried  
in the fire that wee may bee  
rich, and white raiment that  
our nakednesse might not ap-  
peare an eye salve, that now  
in this our daies wee might  
see those things which belong  
vnto our peace, and all this  
without mony: now that after  
all this there should be thou-  
sands amongst vs, who being  
asked a reason of the hope that  
is in them, cannot speake to-  
lerable sense why they are  
Christians

Christians rather then professed Infidels; that there should be whole parishes which cannot afford one wise word toward the defence of our most holy profession, that many who will take it very ill, if they are not accounted as good Christians as the best, should thinke no otherwise of Christ, then some doe of *S. Patricke*, and *S. David*, and other of the Saints of their country. Lastly, that those great and pretious promises which Christ hath purchased for vs, with the vnvaluable price of his owne dearest blood, by those who one day thinke to haue their share in them; that they set as slothfull, ignorant, heartles affections vpon them, as professed infidells doe vpon those poore imaginary, deluding hopes which Satan is permit-

56 *The triall of a Christians*

ted to abuse them with, questionlesse it becomes not any man, who hath resolved the rest of his time in the flesh, to seeke the things of Christ Iesus, and hath felt in his owne soule what good reason hee hath for it, I say it becomes not any such to thinke of these things which grate so mercilesly vpon his Saviours wounds, and even make them bleed a fresh, without sighs and groanes, a bleeding heart, and a great deale of secret mourning. Betweene the millions of men who hate the redeemer of the world, and the multitude which loue him they know not wherefore, O how few are there which loue him in sincerity! The second thing which I would intreat of those who vnderstand what a wofull thing it is to bee a stranger

2 To commiserate the lamentable condition of their poore ignorant brethren.

stranger vnto Christ, to be yet vnreconciled vnto God by him, is that they would with yerning bowels commiserate the lamentable condition of their poore ignorant brethren which they shall meet with every where, especially in most country Villages.

I haue obserued vpon occasions much table merriment which hath beene made by tales which passe about of such absurd, senselesse answers as silly Christians haue given, being demanded a reason of their faith, perhaps vpon their death-beds or at their coming to the Lords table. Let such vnnaturall mirth be farre from those who are to strine to haue the same minde in them, which was in Christ Iesus. You, who by the blessed change wrought in your  
F 4      soules,

38 *The triall of a Christians*

soules, haue passed from death  
 vnto life, consider with a  
 thankfull reflexion vpon the  
 Father of lights, that had not  
 he vouchsafed you a more in-  
 genious education, fairer op-  
 portunities to grow acquaint-  
 ed with the mysteries of  
 grace, more distinct call of his  
 sanctifying spirit, and more  
 illuminated apprehensions to  
 discern them, you might haue  
 groped and stumbled in a  
 thicker mist of stupidity then  
 now befooles your vnurwid  
 brethren, you might haue dis-  
 honoured that blessed name  
 by which you are called, by as  
 wild misconceits and horrid  
 follies, as any come from  
 them, and whatsoeuer is ridi-  
 culous in them might haue bin  
 more prodigious in you, you  
 know what price to set vpon  
 your owne soules. You know  
 the

*sincere love vnto Christ.* 59

the soule of the meanest idiot  
is of equall value with yours,  
and that it cost the redeemer  
of the World as many stripes  
and wounds as yours, O then  
pitty thy brethren so likely to  
perish, for whom Christ died,  
yea the rather, because they  
being stuffed with sottish con-  
cepts, will be ready to laugh  
at those who shall pittie them:  
Take all opportunities to doe  
them some spirituall good as  
occasion shall be offered, con-  
ferring with them and pray-  
ing for them: and let Christian  
sympathies bee the least you  
can afford them; you know  
what you meane, when you  
pray daily that Gods king-  
dome may come; remember,  
you pray not in earnest, vn-  
lesse you doe your faithfull en-  
deauour to helpe it forward, as  
in your owne hearts, so in the  
F 5 hearts

*The trial of a Christians*

hearts of your brethren, with which at any time you converse. Consider I beseech you, what a dismall fogge of Popery doth yet darken this Iland. Popery which few thinke of, I meane that blind absurd implicite faith of beleeuing, as the Church beleeueth. For there is not a pin to choole betweene him that beleeueth in grosse, what the Church of England beleeueth, and him that beleeueth as that synagogue of Satan the Church of Rome beleeueth, it neither knowes any thing explicitly, what either Church beleeueth. Meditate on this, and what zeale, what conrage, what indignation you feelee in your breasts against the Antichristian impostures of Rome, let them fly I beseech you vpon all occasions, against this Protestant



*sincere loue vnto Christ. 61*

Protestant Popery. But I see no hope but that the Colliers faith will haue the greatest number of professors, whilst accurate Catechizing of all sorts of people, which did so much good in the primitiue Church, is in ours so generally neglected. But I conclude, bespeaking you in the words of *S. Inde, But yee beloved, building up your selues on your most holy faith, praying in the holy Ghost. Keepe your selues in the loue of God, looking for the mercies of our Lord Iesus Christ vnto eternall life. And of some haue compassion making a difference. And others saue with feare, pulling them out of the fire: hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*

O thou father of mercies and God of all consolations, looke downe from thy throne

62 *The triall of a Christians*

of eternitie, and take notice of  
vs thy poore seruants, who  
doe now desire to muster vp  
all the faculties which thou  
hast giuen vs, and to employ  
thē in an acceptable thank-  
giuing vnto thee. O Lord wee  
desire to spend our best spirits  
even to exhale our dearest  
soules in thankfull ejaculati-  
ons vnto thee, for that most  
incomprehensibly admirable  
contrivance of our salvation,  
by the death of the sonne of  
thy loue: O Lord we desire to  
be transported with a holy a-  
mazement, as often as wee  
thinke of this mystery of my-  
steries, and even to empty our  
hearts of their secrets in hal-  
laluiahs, and voices of exulta-  
tion. Most holy Lord, wee  
praise thee, for the marvelous  
light of thy Gospell, which  
hath acquainted vs with those

won-

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 63

wonders of mercy, which thy  
Christ hath performed for our  
soules, for those comfortable  
evidences of our justification  
by him, with which our brui-  
fed consciences haue beene  
most graciously revived. Wee  
praise thee likewise for those  
wonders of a new creation  
which thy blessed spirit hath  
begunne in our hearts, for that  
it hath begunne to weaken  
and wast the body of sinne, to  
crucify those corruptiōs which  
heretofore hath beene most  
insolent in vs, to weane vs frō  
those vanities, which hereto-  
fore haue beene our chiefe  
comforts, and to make vs more  
willing to bee kept within a  
holy compasse. O Lord we de-  
sire, wee desire with most en-  
larged hearts, to blesse thy in-  
finite goodnesse, for all those  
ravishing irradiations and glo-  
rious.

64 *The triall of a Christians*

rious Prefaces of our blessed immortality, by which thy comforting spirit hath so often encouraged vs to patient continuance in well doing. Wee blesse thee for all the heavenly thoughts, affections, desires, & resolutions which thou hast put into vs at any time, wee praise thee for that portion of thy good word which thou hast afforded vs at this time, O thou that delightest to pardon abundantly, pardon all the errors & imperfections which haue come either from me in delivering, or any of thy people in entertaining thy message. Let it not bee a favour of death vnto death, vnto any mā who hath bene within the sound of it, but let it some way or other bee beneficiall vnto him in respect of thy kingdom. And now oh thou that dwellest

*Sincere loue vnto Christ.* 63

dwellest in vnapprochable  
splendor, quite out of the ken  
of mortality, seeing thou hast  
suffered dust and ashes to ap-  
proch so neere to thee in thy  
ordinances, dismisie not any  
one of vs, wee beseech thee,  
without a blessing, send not a-  
ny one of vs without a com-  
fortable beame of thy counte-  
nance shining into his heart;  
Thou art the fountaine of ho-  
linesse, send vs not therefore  
out of thy presence without  
some more cleerenesse in our  
apprehensions of thy saving  
mysterics, and heavenlinesse  
in our affections vnto them.  
Send vs not from thy throne  
of grace but with a heavenly  
calme in our soules, or with  
such tempests of repentance as  
may prepare vs for an everla-  
sting serenity, O Lord send vs  
not away but either with that  
joy

66 *The triall of a Christians*  
joy which passeth all vnder- 7  
standing, or that godly sorrow  
which may prepare vs for it.—  
To thee O Father with thy be-  
loued Sonne and blessed Spirit,  
three most glorious Persons, &  
one infinite Deity, be ascribed  
all Honour, Power, Praise,  
Might, Majestie, and Domini-  
on, by vs poore sinners here  
militant on earth, and all the  
glorified companies trium-  
phant in Heaven, from this  
time forth for evermore.

*Amen, Amen.*

**F I N I S.**

THE  
TRIAL OF  
our sincere loue  
to Christ.

EPHES. 6. V. 24.

*Grace be with al them that loue  
our Lord Iesus Christ in sin-  
cerity.*

**W**ill not dis-  
courage your  
attention with  
a tedious re-  
petition of  
what I haue  
heretofore in another audi-  
ence deliuered vpon this Scri-  
pture:

68. *The triall of a Christians*

pture, something must needs be recalled to guid your attention into the ensuing discourse & to knit that vnto a former: but I wil not trouble you with a word more, then the necessity of methode shall enforce me vnto. To winde vp then as much as is necessary in a breife introduction.

We liue in an age of a Presumption as peremptory as vniuersall: they are rare men that make any question of their salvation, and which is most to be pitied, they are for the most part such as haue least reason. I am perswaded, there was neuer yet any time when men were generally more confident in their hope of heaven, or lesse able to giue a wise reason for it; inso much, that it may be but too probably conjectured, that to one that perishes



rishtes through dispaire, there  
miscarry hundreds through  
presumption.

This generall presumption  
stands vpon these two gene-  
ral suppositions. 1. That Grace,  
that is, all the gracious, preci-  
ous promises of God concer-  
ning a better life, doe infalli-  
bly appertaine to all such as  
loue Christ Iesus in sincerity:  
that is, to all such as are true,  
serious, resolute Christians.  
2. That wee our selues are all  
such men, that we are all Chri-  
stians good enough to serue  
the turne, though wee are not  
so forward and exemplary,  
though we keepe not such stir-  
with our profession as some o-  
thers doe. The first suppositiō  
is out of all question, and can  
never bee brought into dispu-  
tation by those which submit  
to the Scriptures, it being the  
scope,

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scope, not only of my Text, but  
also of the whole Gospell, yea  
of the Law and the Prophets.  
So that (with reverence bee it  
spoken) it shall bee as possible  
for God, that is the eternall  
truth it selfe to lye, as for that  
supposition to fayle any man,  
who observing the conditions  
of it, casts himselfe vpon it: so  
that in strict propriety of  
speech, it is not of it selfe any  
prop of presumption, but only  
by accident as it's subject to  
mis-application by vs. Well  
then, presumption stands more  
directly, and leanes more hea-  
vily vpon the second supposi-  
tion, and therefore all our care  
must bee every man for him-  
selfe, to see that wee are not  
mistaken in our account at  
home, to bee sure wee are all  
such men as wee deeme our  
selues to be, that is, such *Chri-*  
*stians*

istians, as may vpon good sufficient grounds, lay claime vnto, and plead interest in all the glorious promises in Christ Iesus.

Vpon this I observed all the conditions required on our part, and by consequent, the whole tryall of our assurance, to be comprised in this sincerity of our loue towards him; and farther, for the exact triall, and through examination of this, I imposed vpon my selfe the handling of three most considerable points which make vp it selfe, and evidence vnto vs the sincerity of our loue vnto Christ. 1. The true immediate ground, or originall of it. 2. The requisite degree or intension of it. 3. The especiall fruits and effects of it.

Concerning the originall of our loue vnto Christ, amongst many

many insufficient deceauable grounds of it, I vndertooke the discovery of one which I found to be most dangerous and vniuersall: to wit, natural instincts of religion in generall restrained to Christianity by birth & education. This discovery, I haue already elsewhere at large, as God enabled me, performed. In the second place, I promised a declaratiō of the true, proper, and sure ground of sincere loue vnto Christ: & this by the assistance of the blessed spirit, you shall haue paid at this time.

Well then, what is the most immediate and proper ground of the sincere loue of a poore sinner vnto his Saviour Iesus Christ? I answered out of the question, when in earnest hee finds himselfe to bee a miserable sinner, and apprehends Christ

Christ Iesus to be his gracious Saviour, and one of whom hee stands in infinite need, Or to to deliuer it more fully, it is a cleare, distinct, particular, tender apprehension of his owne infinite wants and miseries by reason of sinne, & of those miracles of love & mercy which Christ hath performed to cure these and supply those, & that as freely & purposely for him, as for any man else.

The ground  
of a Christi-  
ans love  
to Christ.

To cleare and confirme this excellent point I will, as God hath directed my meditations.

- 1 First proue it to be so.
- 2 And then demonstrate why it is so.

That it is so, appeares by sundry places of holy Scripture, out of which I will cull some few, which seeme to me most pregnant and pertinent. First,  
*Flowe the Lord,* saith holy Da-  
vid

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vid, Psalm. 116. 1. marke his  
reason; because hee hath heard  
my voice and my supplications.  
But what kinde of supplicati-  
ons were these? vpon what oc-  
casion were they made? you  
may see both, v. 3. 4. The sor-  
rowes of death compassed me a-  
bout, and the paines of hell gate  
hold vpon me: then called I vpon  
the name of the Lord, O  
Lord I beseech thee deliver my  
soule. These were my suppli-  
cations, which the Lord hath  
heard, and therefore I loue him,  
yea, because he hath inclined his  
care vnto me in these my spiri-  
tuall agonies, I will call vpon  
him as long as I liue. 2. we haue  
an eminent place, 1. Ioh. . . 19.  
We loue him, marke his reason,  
because he first loued vs. True,  
some may say, God hath loa-  
ded vs with innumerable ex-  
pressions of his loue in our  
creation

creation and preservation, and we doe reciprocally loue him for them: but what's this to the loue of Christ? To omit as impertinent to this place, that in some sort we owe both our creation & temporall preservation vnto Gods loue in Christ; seeing it is not probable, but the whole frame of nature should haue beene dissolved presently vpon the fall, had not God of his mercy intended a Redeemer for mankinde to be revealed in the fulnesse of time: but to let this passe, *S. Iohn* in these words, *because he first loued vs*, vnderstands that loue of loues, that boundlesse, incomprehensible loue of God wherewith hee hath loued vs in Christ: as it plainly appears by comparing 9. & 10. verses. In this (that is) in this infinitely more, then in any mercy of

G

creation

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creation or preservation, was manifested the loue of God towards vs, because that God sent his onely begotten sonne into the world, that we might liue through him. Herein is loue (that is) herein infinitely more then in any thing else, not that we loued God, but that he loued vs, and sent his sonne to bee the propitiation for our sinnes. To recollect, and to bring it home to the point in hand, when as the same S. Iohn speakes v. 16. Wee haue knowne and beloued the loue that God hath to vs, when we find our selues to haue beene euen dead men, and that God sent his Son, that we might liue through him, when wee perceaued our selues overloden with sinnes, and that Christ was sent purposely to be a propitiation for them. O here is the true originall of our loue

LECTION - vnto



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vnto him, now wee loue him,  
because hee first loued vs. A  
third place, & i'le trouble you  
with no more, is *Luc. 7. 37.*  
where we haue a whole para-  
ble to this purpose, deliuered  
by our Sayiour himselfe to  
make the Pharisees vnderstand  
what that poore womans meant  
by those strange distracted &  
seemingly madde expressions  
of her loue vnto him in wash-  
ing his feet with teares, and  
wiping them with her haire,  
&c. The parable is of a Cred-  
itor & his two debtors; I need  
not repeat it, most of you  
knowe it already, others may  
peruse it if they please. The  
application of it is, that then  
sinners doe indeed fall in loue  
with their Saviour when they  
perceiue themselves to be o-  
uer head and eares, as we say  
in debt vnto God, and them-  
selues

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selues most vnable to discharge one farthing, whē they feelee that God begins to put his bond in suite which they had forfeited long before they were borne, when he sends an arrest for them by the terrours of his Law, their owne consciences, & the spirit of bondage. Lastly, when they feelee themselves even haied towards that prison from which never any man came out, which was once in, and then most opportunely comes in Christ Iesus with his merits, satisfies his father to the full, rescues them out of the sergeants hands, that they being deliuered out of the hands of their enemies may serue him without feare, in holinesse and righteousnesse before him all the daies of their life. Indeed the conclusion of the application vers.

47. seemes to thwart and vn-  
say all that which I haue said:  
*Her sinnes which are many are  
forgiuen her, because shee loued  
much.* I deny not but the  
words as they are, admit a pi-  
ous sense, neither am I igno-  
rant with how little adoe  
they may be reconciled which  
haue beene hitherto spoken.

But if I might bee worthy  
to deliuer mine own opinion,  
with due respect vnto the  
translaters, I would alter one  
word in the translation, which  
I suspect should runne thus:

*Her sinnes which are many are  
forgiuen, therefore shee hath lo-  
ued much.* The sense requires  
this construction. 1. Because  
the whole scope of the para-  
ble is to shew that hee loues  
most to whom most is forgiue,  
and not contrarily, that most  
is forgiuen to him that loues

The ordi-  
nary tran-  
slation cor-  
rected.

most. 2. The antithesis in the same verse requires it, the words, but to whom little is forgiven he loveth little, supposeth this thesis, because many finnes are forgiven her therefore much. Now as the sense requires this interpretation, so the conjunction *on* admits it: for albeit not in the pure Greek idiom, yet in the Hebraicke use of it, answers to all the acceptions of the Hebrew *וְ* which hath sometimes the signification of *ideo*, *quapropter*, &c. Neither may it prejudice this interpretation, that our Saviour after all those expressions of love from the penitent woman, and his apologie for himselfe and her to the Pharisee, tells her that her finnes are forgiven her: this was but that sentence of absolution for her greater comfort

*Sincere loue vnto Christ.* 81

fort, and assurance outwardly pronounced, of which no doubt but she had before some gracious inklings within, and the vertue of which she had already tasted, though not in that comfortable measure, or distinct manner as she desired.

But now I would not willingly be mistaken in the point as if my opinion were, or I intended to proue out of the afore-cited places, that there is no true loue vnto Christ, but what is grounded vpon an actual perswasion of the remission of our sinnes by him. Alas how many poore soules euen languish with a spirituall thirst after him! how many bleeding hearts both feeble and expresse most vehement pangs of importunate loue towards him: how many broken spirits euen spend and exhale them-

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selues in continuall fallies as it were, and egressions of affection vnto him, who haue indeed heard, but not as yet tasted how gracious he is, who haue not as yet perceaued in themselves those inward whisperings of comfort. *Feare not, I am thy salvation: bee of good cheere thy sinnes bee forgiven thee: in a word, who haue not as yet felt themselves sealed to the day of redemption by that holy spirit of promise?*

To rescue the truth out of these clouds, and to present it in her brightnesse vnto you, we must first obserue that every degree of true spirituall loue vnto Christ, proceeds from a proportionable act of sauing faith: Secondly, that there is a twofold loue, i. One of desire, which is an earnest longing after that, which wee beleeye would

would doe vs much good if wee could attaine vnto it.

2. Another of complacencie, when having attained that we desire, we hugge, and embrace it, and solace our selues in the fruition of it. Now as ordinarily in the loue of any other object: so likewise if wee respect Christ Iesus, the first of these loues is the introduction to the second; and both of the issue from a proportionable act of faith precedent. That affectionate longing, and thirstie loue wherewith we pene and gaspe after Christ having never yet been refreshed with any comfortable testimony of the spirit since the beginning of our humiliation, proceeds from that former act of faith whereby we assent vnto all the Gospell promises as most true and good in themselves, and

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infinitely better vnto vs then  
 any thing in the world; could  
 we bee once assured that they  
 belong vnto vs as well as to  
 other men. That other loue of  
 complacencie, when with the  
 Psal we retorne vnto our rest,  
 because the Lord hath dealt  
 bountifully with vs, & sweet-  
 ly repose our selues in the lap  
 of our Saviour, with content  
 vnspcakable and full of glory,  
 proceeds from that last act of  
 faith, whereby we are actual-  
 ly perswaded by those wel-  
 come whispers of the spirit of  
 adoption, that Christ is as cer-  
 tainly our Saviour as any mans  
 else, and that our debts (as in-  
 finite as they were) are can-  
 celled to a farthing, as well as  
 the smaller summes of others.  
 Lastly, it will not be amisse  
 to obserue two things of this  
 loue of complacency arising  
 from



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 85

from a perswasion of Christs  
loue vnto vs in particular.  
1. It's subiect to all variations  
or changes, ebbings and flow-  
ings of that perswasion. For as  
often as in any violent tempta-  
tion, or sensible disersion our  
perswasion seemes to be con-  
futed, this loue of complacen-  
cie is either for a time quite  
stupified, or else it falls back as  
it were into that thirsty anxi-  
ous loue of desire. 2. This loue  
of complacencie admits de-  
grees proportionably to the  
degrees of that perswasion. If  
that be cleare and strong, this  
loue is more cheerefull & plea-  
sant: if that be weake and ob-  
scure, this loue is not so spright-  
full, but somewhat lumpish  
being cold with many feares,  
and jealousies. Whence this  
loue of complacency may not  
vnfitly be subdivided. 1. Into

Faith may  
be sincere  
though  
mixed with  
Anxiety.

Ordinary

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Ordinary. loue which proceeds from a weaker degree of that last act of faith, and though sincere, yet being imperfect, is mixed with anxiety in the same proportion as that is with doubting. And 2. into Heroicall loue which springeth from a more eminent and transcendent pitch of perswasion concerning our owne reconciliation in particular: this is that perfect loue, which S. *Iohn* saies, casteth out all feare (to wit) of distrust, bringing vs into a more intimate familiarity with God. I call the first Ordinary, because most Christians though effectually called doe ordinarily feele but such a timorous loue in themselves. The second which I call Heroicall in that sense in which eminent vertues haue their Epithite, is constantly only

ly in such as either beside the  
evidence of the word and spi-  
rit, haue had some speciall re-  
velation to put them out of all  
doubt concerning their estate  
to Godward, on such as by a  
constant close walking with  
God, haue beene long exerci-  
sed in a Christian course,  
haue often entertained Christ  
Iesus at supper in their hearts,  
and habituated themselves in-  
to a more familiar acquaint-  
tance, with that holy spirit  
which brings all the good  
news from heauen to those di-  
ligent soules. which carefully  
wait for it.

Constancy  
in a Chri-  
stian course  
frequent  
tasts of  
Christs  
loue, and  
the Testi-  
mony of  
the spirit  
assure vs of  
our Salva-  
tion.

Thus haue I according to  
the skill that is giuen mee,  
proued the originall of the  
syncere loue of a sinner vnto  
Christ Iesus blessed for ever,  
to be a serious tender appre-  
hension of his own extreame  
neede.

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need of Christ, and of Christs  
superabundant love vnto him.  
I haue likewise explained this  
truth, and vindicated it from  
such exceptions as crossed my  
way. I come now to discover  
the demonstrative reason of  
this truth, and after I haue  
shewed that it is so, to shew  
you now why it must be so.

Wee are all borne into the  
world ~~as~~ haters of God,  
and while wee continue in  
that naturall stupid condition,  
wherein we were borne, ~~we~~

There is ~~are~~ all strangers both vnto God  
and Christ, yea, enemies in our  
minde through wicked works,  
as the Apostle speakes. Gal. 1.

21. Wee retaine indeed some  
obscure cloudy notions of a  
God, but not the darkest inti-  
mations of a Saviour, or least  
suspicion of any need we haue  
of one. In a word albeit wee

been

are

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 89

are borne and bred within the  
shrillest sound of the Gospell,  
yet as long as we continue ~~47-~~  
~~xxor~~ meere animall, naturall  
men, it will not sinke into our  
heads, that we are in such mi-  
serable ~~case~~ ~~brus~~ Preachers  
would make vs beleue wee  
are, how ill its like to goe with  
vs vntill we laboriously en-  
quire after Christ, and get to  
be reconciled vnto God by  
him. Now what more effectu-  
all method can we imagine to  
beate vs out of this naturall  
antipathy against our Creatour  
and Redeemer, yea what di-  
ther contrivance may there be  
to worke such peeuish wret-  
ches, such froward rebels out  
of one extreame into another,  
out of deadly hatred to sincere  
loue of the eternall Father and  
his only Sonne, to pull downe  
their proud stomackes, to  
make

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make them crouch and craule  
vnto his throne of grace, then  
to make them see in what a  
hell they are while they stand  
in this distance from him to a-  
wake their consciences a-  
gainst them, and to make them  
a terrour vnto themselves to  
let the Law thunder and ligh-  
ten into their soules vntill  
their wits and spirits beginne  
to faile them, and then amidst  
all these amazing tempests to

The curses  
of the law  
drue vs to  
Christ.

let the glorious Gospel of  
Christ shine vpon them, to  
shew them Christ Iesus with  
his armes of mercy stretched  
out; and vndertaking to free  
them out of all these confusi-  
ons, and to make their peace  
with his father if they will but  
come vnto him, and trust their  
selues with him, if they will  
but lay to heart, and learne to  
esteeme & admire those won-  
ders

*sincere love vnto Christ.* 91

ders of redemption which he hath compassed for them. Had the prodigall sonnes stocke held out, and hee lyen still afloate in the full-tide of his sinfull pleasures, hee had set vp his staffe in that same country, and quite forgot that hee ever had a father: yea when the tide was gone and had left him vpon the sands: when the revells were ended, his bravery quite worne out into beggery, and himselfe preferred to be an attendant of a company of hogs, if he could but haue got his belly full of huskes, he would hardly haue thought of returning home: but when these were denyed him, and hee could see nothing but death before him, O now hee comes to himselfe, and begins to thinke of a father hee had, and resolues to goe vnto him, though

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though he might well suspect  
his entertainment. Well,  
whatsoever that may proue,  
he is sure hee goes to a father,  
and therefore on he goes, and  
when hee was yet a farte off,  
full of aboding feares, and dis-  
consolate things, behold his  
father about his necke before  
he was aware of him, acting  
an over-joyed man, hee hangs  
about him and kisses him,  
trims him vp with a robe and  
a ring, conducts him home in  
a kinde of triumph, and wel-  
comes him with the solemnity  
of a feast and musicke. Here  
was a change for the prodigall  
enough to haue turned his  
braines as we say, but sure it  
could not but turne his heart.  
Had that beene of marble or  
adamant, this could not, but  
melt it into loue. O what a  
swelling, a thronging, a wrast-  
ling



ling did hee now feelee in his bowels of tendrest passions, impatient for want of expression. O how did he now lay about him with teares of sorrow and teares of ioy, being much pulled; whether it would best become to prosecute his joy most or his sorrow: in brieffe how mad is hee with himselfe that hee had beene such a sonne to such a Father.

I haue insisted the longer vpon the prodigals case, because indeed it is our owne. For ordinarily; our heavenly father vseth the same method to fetch vs his prodigall children home vnto him, and to bring vs in loue with his beloued sonne Iesus Christ. We are all as soone as we are born, gotten into a farre country, where we mispend, and mis-

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employ all those faculties, and endowments, with which our Creator hath furnished vs, in the revels of sinne and vanity, walking on merrily and confidently *ut & aīva tū noquū tū* as the Apostle speaks *Ephes. 2. 2.* according to the course of this worlde, professing indeed (for fashion sake) loue both vnto God and Christ, but all the while denying and disclaiming them both in our hearts and conuertations. But God who is rich in mercy for his great loue wherewith hee hath loued vs, *Ephes. 2. 4.* when hee hath let vs runne our selues even out of breath in these riotous courses, and even tyred our selues in our journey to hell, thinkes it fit to stop our progresse, and first to make vs vnderstand our selues, that we may the better esteeme of him.

him and whom hee hath sent  
Iesus Christ. First then hee in-  
spires vs with so much spiritu-  
all life, as may make vs feele  
our spirituall burden, consist-  
ing of our sinnes, and his cur-  
ses due vnto them; hee raises  
vp many affrightments, and  
grim apparitions in our con-  
sciencences, he giues Satan leaue  
to insult over vs, whatsoeuer  
outward contentment we fa-  
sten on, to put vs out of these  
dumppes, he beates vs off from  
it, he leaues vs not huskes to  
feed on, he driues vs out of one  
shift into another, til at last we  
are driven out of all, and so  
farre, that wee see plainely,  
there is but one way with vs,  
even to perish everlastingly,  
vnlesse we can get to bee re-  
conciled vnto him. Now wee  
begin to come to our selues,  
and perceiuing our onely  
course

Gods ju-  
stice must  
be satisfied  
ere we can  
obtaine his  
mercy.

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course which we haue left, to  
bee, to eat our selues vpon  
Gods mercy, but no getting  
neare vnto that, vnlesse his  
justice be first satisfied, no pos-  
sibility of that on our parts, vn-  
lesse we can get the satisfaci-  
on of Christ imputed vnto vs,  
finding the Scriptures so pe-  
remptory, that there is no com-  
ming to the Father, but by the  
Sonne, that hee that hath the  
Sonne hath life, but he that hath  
not the Sonne, hath not life, but  
the wrath of God abideth on  
him. *Ioh. 3. 36.* O now wee  
begin to see it was to some  
purpose, that wee haue heard  
Preachers talke so much of  
Christ; now wee beginne to  
hearken better after him, to  
value and admire him; now  
wee wonder how wee could  
endure to bee without him so  
long, that we could thinke so  
slightly

flightly of him heretofore,  
now those holy fits of love  
grow vpon vs apace, and vp-  
on a suddaine, with the *Spoyle*  
in the *Canticles*, wee are sick  
of love. Now are wee entred  
into the love of desire, and  
while our poore soules are  
sweating in these restless pas-  
sions, wee heare at length  
Christ Iesus in a milde still  
voice, inviting all such as are  
weary & heavy laden to come  
vnto him, that hee may giue  
them rest: vpon this wee ad-  
dresse our selues towards him,  
with our burden vpon our  
shoulder, and when wee are  
got within kenne of him, hee  
seemes sometimes to goe  
backward from vs, to make  
vs more eager after him, and  
thus oft-times he lets vs stand  
trembling and shaking, weep-  
ing and groaning vnder our  
bur-

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burdens, till wee are even  
 sinking and frowning vnder  
 them, and then hee conueyes  
 them away, cleares vp the  
 heavens over vs, speakes like  
 a husband vnto our Soules by  
 his Spirit, he presents vs vnto  
 his Father, who now smiles  
 vpon vs with a reconciled  
 countenance, and then vnto  
 his Angels who amongst all  
 their *Halleluiahs*, receiue  
 some addition vnto their tri-  
 umphant mirth by our conver-  
 sion. Now no man need tell  
 vs what Christ hath done for  
 vs, we feele reall experiments  
 of all in our owne hearts, now  
 wee haue scene, and felt, and  
 tasted how infinitely he hath  
 loued vs, we are ready to make  
 our boast of it, and with the  
*Psalmist*, to invite all such as  
 feare God purposely that wee  
 may declare vnto them what  
 he

There are  
 Reall tast  
 of the be-  
 nefits pro-  
 cured by  
 Christ in  
 the hearts  
 of true be-  
 lieuers,

*sincere loue vnto Christ* 99

hee hath done for our soules.

Now we are in that loue of complacency, now wee cling vnto him, and would faine come out of our selues, to creepe vnto him, affecting not only a vnion, but vnity with him, now wee bestirre our selues in all the holy complements of heavenly loue, never thinking wee haue done enough, frequently bathing our selues in those delicious intimacies of our spirituall marriage, which how much they passe all vnderstanding, I appeale to their experiences; to whom these things are no Paradoxes.

You see the excellent contrivance, by which our stubborn rebellious hearts are wrought over vnto the sincere loue of Iesus Christ: I suppose it now expedient to cleare

H

this

100 *The triall of a Christians*

this discourse of the originall of vnfaigned loue, from some doubts and scruples which may arise from it.

1 Whether none can loue Christ in sincerity, but those that are brought vnto it by this method? I answered not one ordinarily, if his conversion bee wrought by the Ministry of the Word. The reason is plaine out of what hath bin deliuered. Wee are to loue Christ as a Saviour: how can we be brought to those, vntill we feele our selues lost, and vnderstand what need we haue of a Saviour? Wee are to loue him as a Mediatour: what reason is there for this, vnlesse we first plainly perceiue God to be our enemy? Lastly, wee are to loue him as our Physitian: what sense is there for that if wee feele not our selues in  
some

The sense  
of our  
owne mi-  
sery makes  
vs in loue  
with Christ  
as a Savi-  
our,



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 101

some danger, if wee feele no  
aches or gripings, no smart a-  
bout our soules, if we finde no  
good that Christ hath done vs,  
or can doe vs? Himselfe tells  
vs, *the whole haue no need of  
the Physitian; onely the sicke,*  
such as feele and acknowledge  
themselves to be sicke, will  
make vse of him. But here it's  
requisite to obserue, that the  
severall passages of this great  
alteration wrought in our aff-  
ections, are more or lesse sen-  
sible, according to the severall  
conditions of the persons. We  
are all prodigalls, yet some  
more, some lesse: we are all  
gone into a farre countrey, yet  
some roue a great deale far-  
ther then others: For illustra-  
tion, some haue had a more re-  
straining education then o-  
thers and beene trained vp in  
a more innocent civility, vn-

102 *The trial of Christians*  
till the time of their visitation,  
which oft-times overtakes  
them very early, and takes  
them in before they are ac-  
quainted with the villaines of  
the world, or vices of the  
times: such, though common-  
ly they take weeping crosse in  
their way too, as they come  
home vnto Christ, yet they  
passe not through so many  
pikes, so many panges, and  
terrors but with lesse stirre &  
difficulty arrive safely at his  
bosome, and get within his  
embraces. On the other side,  
some are starke prodigalls,  
incore Publicans, such as haue  
taken their full swings in the  
wildest exorbitancies, such as  
haue served an apprenticeship,  
perhaps two or three to the  
World, the Flesh, and the Di-  
uell, such as these, when it  
pleaseth God to put his hooke  
in

*Sincere loue vnto Christ. 103*

in their nostrils, to turne them round, and make them looke towards heauen, are brought to the loue of Christ, even steppe by steppe in that method which I haue formerly described. The other are brought vnto the loue of Christ, but these being once brought vnto it, loue him more vehemently, for it's certaine *he loues most to whom most is forgiven.*

2. Doubt, Whether our loue vnto Christ would not be more pure and acceptable vnto him, if it arose from an exact, steddy contemplation of those infinitely amiable excellencies, and transcendent beauties, which are resplendent in his person; *he being the brightnesse of glory, and the expresse image of his Father, Heb. 1.3, or as it is ver. 7.26. The*

H 3

*bright-*

Whether our loue to Christ would not be more exact if we did consider the brightnesse of his glory.

104 The triall of a Christians  
brightnesse of the everlasting  
light, the unspotted mirror of  
the power of God, and the  
image of his goodnesse.

Christ  
only consi-  
dered as a  
Saviour  
moues vs  
to loue  
him.

I answered by proposing  
three brieve considerations:

1. That is the truest loue of  
Christ, which beats vs out of  
our naturall enmity against  
him, and brings vs home with  
longing affections vnto him.

Now it's most true, that the  
person of Christ, absolutely  
considered without the relati-  
on of a Saviour vnto vs, is in-  
vested with most attractiue  
excellencies, and ravishing  
beauties: but if a glimpse of  
that orient lustre should flash  
in the face of an vnregenerate  
ma, or impenitent sinner, vn-  
lesse the sanctifying spirit  
should at the same instant re-  
new his heart, it might driue  
him out of his wits but not

out

*Sincere loue vnto Christ.* 105  
out of his finnes, it might terrify him into a desperate transe, but not advance him to a kindly extasie.

Likewise if one should goe about to winne an enemy of grace vnto the loue of Christ, by the most accurate Metaphysicall discourses of those infinitely superlatiue beauties in the Deity absolutely considered, either they would bee phantasticke riddles vnto him, or at leastwise preuaile no more with him to that purpose, then it would perswade him to loue one dearely, whom he mortally hated, to tell him that hee was a comely Gentleman. 2. Suppose these mysticall contemplations were effectuell this way, yet he that is yet vnacquainted with the power of converting grace, is altogether

Subtlety  
without  
the grace  
of conver-  
sion will  
not kindle  
the loue of  
Christ in  
our hearts.

161 The *triall* of a Christian  
then vndisposed to set him-  
selfe about them. An acute  
but vn sanctified schooleman  
may overstraine his vnder-  
standing with a wearisome  
gaze vpon those invisible  
beauties; so and dazle it into a  
more distempered ignorance;  
but not into such a ravishment  
of loue; as may warme and  
elevate his affections: where  
as the penitent soule, which  
by the grace of conversion  
hath felt those sacred coni-  
gall affections already kindled  
in it selfe; may advantage her  
selfe excellently by such con-  
templations, by her intellectu-  
all aspirings and affaies, as it  
were to see him that is invis-  
ble; and by refreshing her  
selfe with sweetest meditati-  
ons of those inconceivable  
glories which are aboue,  
whete Christ sits at the right  
hand

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 107

hand of God. So that such contemplations, though they cannot ordinarily begin sincere loue vnto Christ in our hearts, yet they may keepe it vp, blowe it into a purer flame, and advance it to a degree of Angelicall sublimity.

3. That loue of Christ is most sincere and acceptable vnto him, which giues him most glory of that which he desires most to be glorified in; that is, of his goodnesse, his attributes, Our loue and workes of mercy in our to Christ Salvation. Hee requires not an must bee ayrie, but a fierie loue. Here- practicall. spectis not so much that speculative loue, which consists in a simple amaze of the vnderstanding, or bare admiration of those vndiscovered perfections of his nature, which haue not as yet done vs any good, though one day the sight

Pro8. *The triall of a Christians*  
of them shall be a part of our  
blessednesse. Christ requires  
that loue of vs, whereby wee  
confesse our selues beholding  
vnto him, that loue which laies  
vs flat before him, and where-  
by we acknowledge we owe  
our selues vnto him. I may  
much admire and applaud a  
man of excellent parts, for his  
rare endowments, and yet  
thinke my selfe no more be-  
holding vnto him, then hee is  
to me, yea I may beare grud-  
ges against him in my mind,  
and be farre from any affectio-  
nate loue towards him: Even  
so with some Schoolemen,  
and writers of mysticall theo-  
logie I may busy my braine,  
and set my minde a staring vp-  
on that absolute *Idea* of vnde-  
filed beauty in the Deity, and  
yet as long as I continue vn-  
sensible of what Christ hath  
done



*Sincere loue vnto Christ. 109*

done for my redemption, re-  
taine a frozen and a flinty  
heart.

If we loue Christ only be-  
cause hee hath loued vs, it  
seemes that in our loue vnto  
him, we haue a chiefe eye vn-  
to our selues, and that we loue  
our selues more then him,  
which ordinarily cannot bee  
pleasing vnto him, or any way  
stand with sincerity. For an-

swere, wee must distinguish  
betweene the impulsue and  
the finall cause of our loue vn-  
to Christ, or in termes some-  
what plainer, betweene the  
first inward occasion of it, and  
the maine scope of it. My care  
of my owne soule originally  
drives me to harken after a Sa-  
viour, and when I haue found  
him, and finde withall, that  
he hath bought me out of my  
selfe, *that I am not my owne,*

The occa-  
sion of our  
loue to Ch.  
is our owne  
salvation,  
the end his  
glory.

as it

~~140~~ The triall of a Christian

as it is, 1. Cor. 6. 19. hence  
forth the maine scope & prin-  
cipall aime of my loue vnto  
him is to doe that for which  
chiefely I was created and re-  
deemed, to let goe all interest  
in my selfe, and giue him his  
whole right, to glorify him  
both in my body & in my soule,  
for both are his, as it is in the  
place now cited. So that my  
loue vnto my Saviour albeit it  
come occasionally and impul-  
sively from my loue of my  
selfe, yet it is terminated prin-  
cipally in his glory, though ac-  
cessorily likewise, as he is con-  
tented, it should in my owne  
happinesse: This is excellent-  
ly illustrated, 2. Cor. 5. 14. 15.  
The loue of Christ constraineth  
vs, saith S. Paul; why so? Be-  
cause wee thus indge, that if  
one died for all; then were all  
dead: here is that originall of

our

*sincere loue vnto Christ. IIII*

our loue implied which I haue  
so largely insisted vpon, it fol-  
loweth, *and he died for all, that*  
*they which henceforth liue,*  
*should not liue vnto themselves,*  
*but vnto him that died for*  
*them, and rose againe.* This is  
the end of Christs loue vnto  
vs, and must bee the businesse  
and maine drift of our loue vn-  
to him. So that our loue vnto  
Christ, arising from a tender  
apprehension of his loue vnto  
vs, is not mercenary, but  
makes most for his honour,  
seeing that if he had not pre-  
vented vs, we should in some  
fort haue stood vpon equall  
tearmes with him. Lastly, it is  
his good pleasure, that wee  
should loue that most which  
is best for vs, that in which  
most consists our perfection, if  
therefore wee loue him as our  
perfection, conceauing our  
selues

112 *The triall of a Christians*  
selues to bee worse then no-  
thing without him if wee re-  
moue our selues, as it were,  
into him, & according to that  
sweet phrase of the Apostle,  
*hide our liues with him in God:* 2  
Though all this while impli-  
citly we loue our selues, yet  
we need not doubt of our sin-  
cerity, this is the very loue  
which hee requires. St Pauls  
loue vnto him was such as  
this. *Gal. 2. 20. I liue, yet not I,  
but Christ in me, and the life  
which I now liue in the flesh, I  
liue by the faith of the Sonne of  
God: marke the reason, & first  
the inducement to all this,  
who hath loued mee, and giuen  
himselfe for mee. It's time by  
your patience to come to some  
application.*

I For examination, to per-  
swade every man that would  
not cozen himselfe in his per- 1  
swasions concerning his spi-  
rituall

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 113

rituall estate, speedily, and impartially, to examine the loue hee supposes hee beares to Christ Iesus by what we haue amply discoursed concerning the true and proper Originall of it. Thou pretendst most entyre loue vnto Christ Iesus, whom thou callest thy Saviour, thou wouldst spit in his face, that should make any serious question of it, thou art confident that thou dost not dissemble with him. Well the, vpon this supposall giue mee leaue to sound thy sincerity with these interrogatories. Dost thou remember a time when thou hadst not that loue in thy breast which now thou reckonest vpon for sound and currant, though thou canst not precisely tell when thou got'st it? Canst thou tell vpon what occasions, or gesse at the manner

114 *The triall of a Christians*

Interroga-  
ories to  
try our sin-  
cerity.

ner how thou attainedst it? Wert thou brought vnto it by that methode which I haue discovered, or at least by one somewhat like it? If thy conscience can now answer these proposalls affirmatiuely, why then I hope thou shalt pick a great deale of sound comfort out of the precedent discourse which will testifie vnto thee that thou louest Christ vpon a true ground, and that therefore, that grace and fauour of God with all the blessings issuing from it, appertaines vnto thee, which the Apostle wilhes to all those which loue Christ Iesus in sincerity. But on the contrary, if thy conscience start at these demands, & beginne to fumble at them, making as if it did not vnderstand them, if they driue thee to confesse, that thou knowest  
no

*sincere loue vnto Christ:* But

no such matter by thy selfe;  
why then my discourse will  
conclude thy pretended loue  
vnto Christ, to be but a meere  
fancie: and thy selfe for this  
present to bee but an vnhappy  
man. To goe yet more parti-  
cularly to work in this exami-  
nation according to the me-  
thode aboue proposed: Hast  
thou beene experimentally  
convinced in thy owne soule  
in what desperate case thou  
art by nature? Hast thou clear-  
ly perceaued to be true in thy  
selfe whatsoeuer the Scrip-  
tures tell thee of the mon-  
strous pronenesse of mans  
heart to any evill, and vnto-  
wardnesse to any good? Hast  
thou beene made to possesse  
*the sinnes of thy youth*, as holy  
*Iob* was? and haue the errors  
of God stared thy guilty con-  
science in the face, & affright-  
ed

116 *The triall of a Christians*

ted it almost into a bloody sweat, and then hath there appeared as it were an Angell comforting thee? Hast thou felt thy selfe a condemned man, and even going to execution, and hath Christ Iesus in the nick stept in with thy pardon both purchased and sealed with his owne most pretious blood? If thou hast felt either these passages, or some which may serue proportionably instead of them, to bee the cause of that which thou professest vnto Christ, I dare not question the synceritie of it, least with those, *Ezech. 13. I wound thar soule which should not dye, and make the heart of him sad, whom the Lord hath not made sad.* I should wrong thee exceedingly not to belecue that Christ is him whom thy soule loueth, & that with *S. Pauls* constraining loue



*sincere love unto Christ.* 117

*love*, a love as strong as death,  
which many waters cannot quench  
neither shall the floods drowne  
it: Cant. 8. 7. But now on the  
contrary, to conclude negative-  
ly from the former interroga-  
tories, to inferre the want of  
sincerity in any man for his not  
feeling those passages as they  
are *verbatim* proposed,  
would be too rigid, & perhaps  
raise a tumult in a well settled  
conscience: Onely thus much  
Ile say, if all of them sound as  
riddles and vncouth mysteries  
vnto thee, if thou never knew-  
est any thing like to what was  
proposed by thy selfe, as I  
feare many haue not. If thou  
knowest not what it meanes  
to come heavy laden, poore in  
spirit, hungry and thirsty vnto  
Christ: why then I wonder  
thou shouldst bee so sottish as  
to conceaue, or impudent as  
to

118 *The trial of a Christian*  
to affirm, that thou lovest  
Christ, if thou wouldst have  
vnderstand thee, that thou lo-  
uest him in sincerity. I doe  
suppose that thou lovest him  
vpon custome, as thou dost the  
fashio of thy country in which  
thou hast bene borne & bred,  
but so does the greatest part of  
the world despise him, vpon as  
good a ground as that: so does  
a Turke loue *Mahomet*, one of  
the basest miscreants that ever  
was, vpon as substantiall a  
ground as that. But we speake  
of that transcendent loue of  
him, which cannot possibly be  
due vnto any one else, and  
whiche would be most due vn-  
to him, though all the lawes &  
customes in the world should  
vniuersally conspire to crye it  
downe, dost thou professe such  
a loue vnto him, and knowest  
not wherefore? nor vpon what

*Sincere Iouement Christ.* 319

occasion thou wert moued vnto it? It would vex a man to the soule, who knowes indeed what it is to loue Christ, and how him selfe was brought vnto it, to consider the confident stupidity of multitudes in euery place who will not be put out of their dreame, that they meant as louingly to Christ as any man, when as indeed they are not as yet come so far as to perceauce any proper reason why they should loue him, or what reason he hath to expect any loue from them. I knowe they will say, they loue him because he died for them, and they hope to be saued by him: Alas these are words of course and as soone spoken as any other: they say this, because they were ever taught to say so, and never liued among any that said the contrary. Beloued  
it

§26 *The triall of a Christians*

That faith  
must be ex-  
perimentall  
which is  
the original  
of sincere  
loue.

it is not the saying of this, or  
beleeuing it confusedly like  
some old story or tradition wil  
melt our congealed hearts in-  
to the loue of Christ: No, it  
must be through distinct fee-  
ling of it in our owne soules, it  
must bee the experience of  
this, which makes vs enamou-  
red on him and sets our hearts  
a mounting towards him in  
those seraphicall flames of san-  
ctified affection.

Cautions  
against Co-  
zening sem-  
blance; of  
Loue.

The Originall of sincere  
loue vnto Christ, being disco-  
uered, and directions given  
for selfe examination concer-  
ning it, a second vse shall bee  
for caution against many co-  
zening semblances of loue vn-  
to Christ, which may make vs  
thinke a great deale better of  
our selues then wee haue rea-  
son, which may easily bee dis-  
couered by trying them by  
this

this originall. <sup>or</sup> To instance in  
some particulars: There is ma-  
ny a Ruffian in this kingdome,  
who if he should heare a *few*  
blaspheming Christ, his blood  
would quickly bee vpon; hee  
would long to bee doing with  
him, and bee hardly kept from  
hacking him in peeces. O  
what a friend vnto Christ will  
such a man suppose himselfe  
to be, he will conceipt he hath  
behaued himselfe like a Tem-  
pler, & done him knights ser-  
vice, and a hundred to one, but  
in this humour, he will call his  
companions *to come and see the*  
*zeale which he hath for Christ*  
*Iesus.* But if there were any  
such swaggering *Zelot* in this  
assembly, I would aske him  
these questions: Dost thou not  
think a hot spirited Turk would  
haue fallen as foule vpon the  
*Jew*, if hee had taken him vili-  
fying

122 *The triall of a Christians*

dying his *Mahomet*? Wouldst  
 thou not vndergoe as dange-  
 rous a quarrell to winne the  
 fauour, or please the humour  
 of thy mistresse? Wouldst  
 thou not thy selfe, or at least  
 dost thou not know some who  
 will quarrell as sternely about  
 a pipe of Tobacco, or the pled-  
 ging of a health? Lastly, hast  
 thou not suffered thy compa-  
 nions to blasphemie Christ in  
 their oathes, perhaps a whole  
 day together, and thy zeale all  
 the while hath beene very  
 well contented with it? You  
 see by these questions, from  
 what variety of carnall vnfan-  
 ctified motiues this seeming  
 plausible zeale may arise: and  
 therefore in all such cases, it  
 much concernes vs, to haue an  
 eye to the true originall of all  
 duties of loue, to consider, not  
 so much what wee doe, as  
 what

what makes vs to doe it, and in  
a word to iudge of our affecti-  
ons, not by the heat, but by the  
fewell. For a second instance;  
Many in reading the history of  
our Saviours life, and confide-  
ring his sweet, debonnaire and  
vnoffensue carriage, & with-  
all the contradictio of sinners,  
the insolencie of proud and  
churlish miscreants which he  
endured with an vnimitable  
patience, will find their hearts  
euer and anon rising in indig-  
nation against the Scribes and  
Pharisees, and euentenderly  
sympathizing with our Savi-  
our. These men may present-  
ly imagine themselves to bee  
deepely in loue with Christ,  
but they may bee miserably  
mistaken. Let them consult  
with their owne experience,  
and obserue, whether they are  
not moued to as sensible passi-

Wee must  
not somuch  
consider  
the vehemency of  
our Affe-  
ction as the  
cause of it.

## 124 The trial of a Christians

ons. By the reading of any o-  
ther story, though prophane, if  
it be any way proportionable  
vnto the Evangelicall story for  
occurrences: twenty to one  
but they will finde it so: There  
is not any good story, either sa-  
cred or prophane, but for the  
most part it drawes the mind  
of the reader, for the time at  
least, into some factio. Where-  
in it is evident, that such stir-  
rings of the affections, may  
proceed from a bare historicall  
faith, joynd with that com-  
mon ingenuity of nature, which  
teaches vs to adore the heroi-  
call vertues of Vy or thines; long  
since deceased, and to commi-  
serate their vnderferved disa-  
sters. Yea, which is worth ob-  
servation, they may proceed  
from this common ingenuity,  
by the meere working of the  
fancie, without any historicall  
beleefe

Many pas-  
sionate po-  
sitions of  
our loue to  
Christ may  
bee the  
fruits of a  
bare Histo-  
ricall faith  
joynd with  
common  
ingenuity.



*in fidei lona vultu Christi.* 125  
beleefe at all. We finde it by  
experieñce in reading amorous  
stories, or histories of strange  
adventores, which though we  
knowe and beleue to be fay-  
ned, yet oft times, it handson-  
ly continued; they raise more  
serious tumults of passions in  
our mindes, then the most re-  
all stories wee can meet with.  
Now the reason of it (if my  
owne fancy sayle me not) is,  
because the imaginatio, which  
hath the same command over  
the passions, which the Poets  
haue given *Eolus* over the  
windes, is it selfe stir'd vp to  
sympathize with all such re-  
presentations as are exquisi-  
tely shap'd & limb'd according  
to it's owne Ideas & inward  
contrivances: and in this case,  
the imagination pering vpon  
the representation it selfe yso  
that suite well with it's owne  
y<sup>magin</sup> I 2 images

226 *The Ball of a Christians*  
Images within, it regards not  
not much, whether it be of an  
acted truth, or of a possibility,  
forgetting, as it were, for the  
present, to distinguish what  
might haue beene from what  
hath beene. This observation  
directs me to a third Instance,  
-with which I will conclude:  
some perhaps may weepe de-  
voutly at a Passion-Sermon, &  
presently imagine their teares  
to be distillations of tender af-  
fections vnto Christ; They  
maybe so, but they may very  
easily not be so. Who knowes  
not, that the charmes of elo-  
quence about any sad argumēt,  
may easily steale good store of  
teares frō an auditory of wo-  
men, or of soft natur'd men?  
Solemne Musicke, a good Pa-  
vin wil doe as much: any liue-  
ly representation of a Tragical  
accident, whether real or i-  
maginary

imaginary, will doe as much: amongst those that can bee so il busied, as to sit three or foure houres at a Tragedy, some can be so wisely, good natur'd too, as to weepe heartely at it. You see into what variety of mistakes, offices of loue vnto Christ may put vs, while wee consider them loose by themselves, and examine them not by that which ought to be the fundamentall inducement vnto them in our hearts, you see how expedient it is to judge of these complementall expressions of loue vnto our blessed Saviour by our hearts, and not of our hearts by them, and by consequent, you see of what excellent vse this doctrine of the ground, or originall of our loue vnto Christ is, To God the Father, &c.

FINIS.

# I. The

*Sincere loue vnto Christ* I

1. The true and proper ground or originall of it: the speciall reasons inducing vs to loue him.

2. The requisite degree & intention of it: how much we are to loue him.

3. The especiall effects and testimonies of it: what we are to doe because we loue him.

The first of these heads I haue dispatched already; ha-  
ving heretofore in another au-  
dience discovered the false, &  
in this congregation, the true  
grounds of our loue vnto Christ  
Iesus: I am nowalne vpon  
the second point, and therein  
more punctually to enquire,  
how much we are to loue him  
which querie our Saviour him-  
selfe clearely and thoroughly  
resolues in my Text. *If any mā*  
*come vnto me, &c.*

The occa-  
sion of the  
words.

Our Saviour was now in

1  
2 *The triall of a Christians*  
the progresse of his humiliati-  
on, going about & doing good.  
Being on his way, he obserues  
great multitudes thronging &  
flocking after him, no doubt  
for various ends, and vpon va-  
rious motiues. This hee well  
knewe: and therevpon that  
they might not dishonour him  
and deceaue themselves by  
grosse, absurd concepts of a  
common easinesse, for any man  
to get whatsoeuer good was  
to bee gotten from him, by a  
little trotting after him, hee  
thought it expedient to let the  
all knowe before hand, what  
they must of necessitie resolue  
vpon, if they would followe  
him to any purpose, & solemn-  
ly to forewarne them, what  
they must trust vnto if they  
made account to get any good  
by running after him. *If any  
man will come to mee (that is)*  
hoping

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 3

hoping or desiring to bee better for mee in regard of a better life, *and hate not his Father and Mother, &c.* (that is) if he set not so high a price vpon his hopes by me, that he bring this resolution with him to part with any thing which may hinder him from doing mee constant, vniversall service; yea though it bee that which otherwise he may most lawfully and ought most dearly to affect, *hee cannot bee my Disciple*, he is not qualified either to doe mee that honour which I shall expect from him, or to receaue those favours which hee will expect from me. If any man desirous of a more satisfying expectation of this Scripture shall enquire yet more particularly, in what sence the Disciple of Christ must hate his parents & children.

The explanation of them.

4 The triall of a Christians  
children, wife and kindred,  
yea and his owne life.

I answer. 1. The law of  
God doth not only permit, but  
also command vs to loue all  
these, and to embrace them  
with the sweetest dearest affec-  
tions that nature can possibly  
stirre vp in our breasts & bow-  
els: Farre be it from our Savi-  
our to contradict this law by  
requiring that his Disciples at  
their very first entrance into  
the schoole, should turne bar-  
barous and strip themselves  
of those sacred, decent affecti-  
ons of nature and humanity:  
that which he requires is this,  
that seeing even during the  
true Church there will daily  
happen many cases wherein  
wee must needs either deale  
vnkindly or dishonourably  
with him, or breake squares  
with such as are neere & deere  
vnto



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 3

vnto vs, and in time of persecution we may be so put to it that we must either bee ashamed of him before men, and in the extremity of basenesse abjure him, or else part with our temporall life and all contentments; I say! heere requires, that his Disciples should come with mindes so possessed with an extraordinary overreaching esteeme of him beyond any thing else, that they might bee prepared afore hand for such exigents, and resolute to runne the most desperate hazard of the losse of any mans fauour, or their owne liues, that nothing may interrupt their obedience vnto him, or intercept the light of his countenance from them. 2. Wee are to note, that the hatred which is required, hath not reference to the persons specified in my  
Text,

8. *The triall of a Christians*

Text, but to such favours and contentments as wee may receive from them. The love of Christ will not suffer; much lesse canse vs, in any case to neglect the duties, or growe weary of the relations of nature: onely thus much Christ expects from vs. seeing wee may bee often driven to that pass that we must either loose him, or the good looks of those whom wee account our best friends, that in comparison of our hopes by the Gospell, wee should so hate, (that is) by a Hebraisme; neglect or disesteeme whatsoever comforts or favours wee could expect from them, that without any long pause or deliberation, we may bee content to let them goe, and be glad we are so rid of them, that wee may sticke close vnto Christ, and be found

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 7

in him enwrapped in his righte-  
teousnesse. To vnfold this  
yet more distinctly: wee may  
part from that which is deare  
vnto vs for the loue of God or  
Christ in two respects. 1. As  
a sacrifice, to wit, when God  
is glorified by that which wee  
part with: so *Abraham* was  
willing to part with *Isaake*,  
and in this respect might bee  
said to hate him, though no  
doubt but his bowels yearned  
most vehemently, even when  
his hand was fetching the fa-  
tall blow; so that heroicall  
mother *2. Macc. 7.* hated her  
seauen sonnes whom indeed  
she loued most tenderly, be-  
ing content to see them all  
butchered before her eyes  
with horrible rarity of tor-  
ments, that they may not dis-  
obey the law, and God might  
be glorified. 2. As a tempta-  
tion.

We may  
part with  
what is  
deare vnto  
vs for the  
loue of  
Christ in 2.  
respects.

8 *The triall of a Christians*

tion, when wee our selues being severed from it may glorify God more freely: Thus Moses refused to be called the sonne of Pharaohs daughter, hating the treasures of Egypt in comparison of the reproach of Christ, Heb. 11. 26. Thus Ioseph parted with his Mistress and all his hopes by his Master, because he would not doe that great wickednesse and sinne against God. So that indeed the hatred in my Text is more passive then active, consisting in an humble willingness to forgoe any thing which may bee either an acceptable sacrifice vnto Christ, or a dangerous temptation from him, in a well composed dislike and disesteeme of those things, which our nature counts her jewels, when compared to those glorious invisible

The hatred required in Christs disciples is passive more then active.

*Sincere love unto Christ.* 9

ble rarities which they may hinder vs from. Lastly in a placide, well tempered contentednesse, vpon a small warning to part with them, either one after another, or all of them at a clap, so that wee may be sure of the maine, so that by letting them goe, wee may take better hold of Christ Iesus, in whom we are sure to finde with an infinite overplus whatsoeuer wee loose for his sake.

My text being thus explained. I will contract the pith both of it and it's explication into this doctrine. Whosoever makes account to bee the better for his profession of Christ, and to haue his share in those vnvaluable purchases of his passion, must prize Christ Iesus and his hopes by him farre beyond whatsoeuer,

The Doctrine of  
the Text.

or

30 *The triall of a Christians*

or whomsoever hee may most lawfully & ought most dearly to loue in this world, yea farre beyond life it selfe, and whatsoeuer contentments may endear it vnto him. To heape vp other testimonies or to goe any farther then my text for the prooffe of this doctrine, were to prejudice both our Saviours authority, hee being so plaine and peremptory in the point, and your esteeme of it, as if you were not by his bare word sufficiently perswaded and convinced of a truth, so much concerning himselfe and you too, if you doe in earnest desire to haue anything to doe with him. My labour, I suppose will be better spent in demonstrating vnto you the equity of that which may seeme rigour in this doctrine, in discovering  
vnto.

*sincere loue vnto Christ. It*

vnto you what good reasons  
our Saviour had to exact so  
great a measure and high a  
pitch of loue from all those  
who would be partakers of his  
redemption and sharers of his  
merits: Some of those reasons  
I will specify and amplify in  
two considerations.

The equity  
of the Do  
ctrine de-  
monstrate  
by two  
reasons.

1. It will not stand either  
with the justice, or wisdom  
of God the Father, to loose  
the glory of his everlasting  
mercies in his sonne, by con-  
ferring them vpon such as doe  
not perceauē & acknowledge  
some out-stripping excellency  
in them beyond all his tempo-  
rall blessings. Indeed it is vsu-  
all with God in his generall  
providence to heape his tem-  
porall favours vpon such as ne-  
ver thinke of his loue in deal-  
ing thus bountifullly with  
them, but the reason of that is  
because

## 12 The triall of a Christians

spirituall  
blessings  
are not so  
common  
as tempo-  
rall.

God pre-  
sently giues  
an everla-  
sting assu-  
rance of  
salvation to  
all who  
loue Christ  
sincerely.

because he can call them in a-  
gaine, and blow vpon them at  
his pleasure, and though hee  
get no glory for his mercy  
whilst hee bestowes them as  
blessings, yet he can be sure to  
glorify his justice by turning  
them into curles: But now for  
his everlasting mercies, those  
riches of his loue in Christ, he  
vseth not to part with them so  
easily: hee lets not them goe  
out of his hands: by his Mini-  
sters hee proclaimes and dis-  
plaies the infinite worth and  
value of them: if any man bee  
so taken with the lustre of  
them that for joy *Mat. 13. 44.*  
*he goes and sels all that he hath*  
*to buy them,* and thinkes hee  
hath a good bargaine too, God  
presently scales vnto him an  
everlasting assurance of them  
by the spirit of promise, and  
giues possession of them at the  
day



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 13

day of his death, when all other possessions leaue him. But now if any man thinke so poorly of them, that either he will not vouchsafe to cheapen them, or if hee doe thinke them worth the buying, yet will not come off roundly, and buy them outright with all that he hath. I say it will not stand either with the iustice, or wisdom of God the Father, to cast them away vpon such prodigious sorts. The reason may be gathered out of our Saviours words, *Mat. 10. 37. He that loueth Father or Mother more then mee is not worthy of me:* Alas, you will say, no more is hee that loueth him infinitely better, then his Father and Mother: yes such a one is worthy of him, not indeed with such a worthinesse as God may expect but with such

It is as possible to be justified without Christ as to performe any thing which may deserue Christ.

#### 14 The triall of a Christians

such a worthinesse as he in justice may accept: not with such a worthinesse by which he may deserue Christ, for then he would haue no need of him, seeing that worthinesse might as well immediately answer the justice of God without Christ, but with such a worthinesse as may fit him hauing need of Christ, and Christ being freely given him to receiue him. What kinde of worthinesse is that? it is the worthinesse of faith working by loue, consisting in a thorough sense of the extreame misery of our greatest happiness without Christ, in a cleare perswasion of the incomparable worth of those things which wee are promised in Christ, and in a well aduised resolution to doe or suffer any thing that we may be assured

assured of our part in them.

But alas what worthinesse is there in all this? seeing that whatsoever wee can possibly doe or suffer for Christ in this life, is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed Rom. 8. 18.

I answer there can be indeed no meritorious worthinesse in all this, but there is an acceptable worthinesse: for by

acceptance hee is worthy of whatsoever God does for him, who in some good measure vnderstands the worth of his benefits and takes them to heart, desiring and endeavouring to giue him all the glory which hee intended for himselfe in bestowing them. The principall thing God intends in doing good vnto any of his creatures is the glory of his goodnesse, if therefore his

creature

There is a  
two fold  
worthines  
Acceptable  
and Mere-  
torious.

## 15 The trial of a Christian

creature acknowledge his goodnesse proportionably in his benefits, desiring to value them all single at that high price; and in comparison one above another proportionably as the donor would have hee should, hee restores vnto God that which he aimed at in his benefits, and is worthy of them with that worthinesse which a Creator may expect from a creature. Seeing an infinite Creator which had need of nothing, cannot expect any thing from a finite creature hauiing nothing but what hee first bestowed vpon it, but the glory of his benefits.

It is not required by God that any creature should deserue his gifts.

Now to draw neerer vnto the point: the greatest matter containing in it infinite variety of wonders, which God from all eternity hath contriued by his wisdom, compassed

*finere loue vnto Christ. 27*

sed by his power, bestowed by  
his goodnesse ypon mankinde  
to get himselfe as it were an  
infinte masse of glory which  
should suffice him through all  
eternity, was the sending of  
his owne sonne in our nature,  
on our behalfe to satisfie his  
justice. This was that astoni-  
shing project, wherewith that  
invisible Lord blessed for ever  
intended in the fullest, com-  
pleatest measure to glorify all  
his attributes at once, and to  
make himselfe farre more ad-  
mirable then hee was in the  
creatio & government of the  
world. This was that mystery  
which was hidden from ages  
and generations, in which  
God would make knowne  
the riches of his glory. Col. 1.  
26. which holy men for many  
ages together saluted a farre  
off, and reioyced to see, though

The Re-  
demption  
of man is  
the most  
admirable  
worke of  
God.

it

¶ 8 The trial of a Christian

it were through a cloud  
which the Angels themselves  
desire to see most heedful-  
ly to prie into 1. Pet. 1. 12. out  
of their heavenly places be-  
holding in the Church the ma-  
nifold wisdom of God. Ephes.  
3. 10. This being so, whoe-  
ver is admitted to see what is  
the fellowship of the mystery  
which from the beginning of the  
world hath bene hid in God, 2.  
9. If he be so caught vp with  
admiration of it, that he grow  
presently into a loathing of all  
his other happinesse in com-  
parison of this; if at the sight  
of such a concourse of won-  
ders, he be so ravished out of  
himselſe, that hee care not  
what become of what he most  
doted on before, so that hee  
may get his part in that fel-  
lowship, I say, such a one is  
worthy of Christ, because hee  
gives

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 19

giues God that glory which Christ meant to procure him, and therefore it will stand both with his wisdom and justice, to allot such a one his portion out of those *unsearchable riches of Christ* Ep. 3. 8.

But on the contrary: whosoever is admitted to the sight of the fellowship of the same mystery, if he can espy no such extraordinary excellency in it but that hee may keepe himselfe as hee is, and hold fast what he hath, if he cā discerne no such superlatiue worth in it as may call in his thoughts from all other matters, and command their attendance vpon it selfe; if his affections continue still glued vnto such trash and mucke as they were fastened on before, in a word, if hee satisfy himselfe with such grosse conceits as these,

K

that

20 *The triall of a Christians*

They who  
will not  
like Christ  
in those  
tearmes he  
is offered,  
shall never  
enjoy him.

that sure the things which are offered vs in Christ are excellent things, but offered vpon very hard tearmes, and therefore, perhaps other matters may be better for vs for the present, that those are matters of another world and would bee good for vs when we are dead, but in the meane time it's best for vs to make as much of our selues as wee can, and by Gods mercy wee may at length haue our part in those matters as well as those that keepe most stirre about them, (I say) such stupid fots are so strangely vnworthy of Christ, that God cannot doe them any good: his wisdom and his iustice will not suffer him: it would infinitely lesse become his wisdom to prostitute such treasures vnto the trampling of such swine, then

it



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 21

It would become the wisdom of a man to giue children Diamonds to play with, who will bee berter pleased with cherrystones, or to feed hounds with the most costly dainties, which had rather be doing vpon carrion. It's likewise impossible for his iustice to bestow his chiefest, choicest mercies vpon such brutes as will scarce take them for mercies, being not thoroughly perswaded that they haue any need of them; did I say it will not stand with the iustice of God to bestow his principall mercies where they are thus brutishly vnderualue: nay hee that thus vnderualue the must not carry it away for the iustice of God will not suffer him to let that man passe, without the most heavy and fearefull plagues that his om-

22 *The triall of a Christians*

They offer  
the greatest  
affront to  
God, who  
scorne his  
loue.

nipotency can inflict, because it is the greatest affront and most intollerable despight, that such wormes can offer his impassible maiesty, thus as much as in vs lies, to befoole his wisdome and even scorne his loue in that where hee thought to doe vs most good and himselfe most glory, wee forsooth can see no such great need of that, or extraordinary reason for this.

Nay you will say, but wee may value Gods loue in Chrilt very highly, albeit wee esteeme some few things which our nature hath taken speciall likeing vnto before it? No such matter: Hee that esteemes the dearest things he hath, suppose his owne life, but in the least degree aboue it, vndervalues it as much in effect as he that makes no account

*Sincere loue vnto Christ. 23*

count of it at all: would any man say that hee esteemed a pearle who should preferre a barley-corne before it: yet there is some proportion betweene a barley-corne and a pearle, but none at all betweene our temporall life and that exceeding weight of glory, treasured vp for vs by Gods loue in Christ. O this loue of God in sparing his owne son for our redemption, is so full of bottomlesse, fathomlesse mysteries, it is in such transcendent excesse infinite, that those multitudes of his blessings in our creation and preservation, inestimable too in themselves wherewith יום יום day by day he loadeth vs Psal. 68. v. 19. (take them altogether) are not worth the talking off in comparifon of this, nor as wee

24 *The triall of a Christians*  
say to be named the same day  
with it; O this sending of  
Christ to dye for vs, when we  
were yet sinners, was that  
speciall royal present where-  
with the King of heaven  
would commend his loue vn-  
to vs, as the Apostle excel-  
lently expresseth it *Rom, 5. 8.*  
*In this faith Saint Iohn 1. 4. 9.*  
*was manifested the loue of God*  
*towards vs that he sent his one-*  
*ly begotten sonne into the world*  
*that we might live through him*  
*manifested in this? Why, in*  
*what not? for it is in every bit*  
*of bread we eate, in every sup-*  
*per we take in. O but the*  
*noblest blessings of this life*  
*are such poore curtesies in*  
*comparison of what we hope*  
*for by Christ, that Gods loue*  
*though most eminent too,*  
*doe scarce appeare in them,*  
*being eclipsed by that most o-*  
*rient*

*Sincere loue vnto Christ.* 25

rient and everlasting blaze of his loue in Christ.

Wherefore to conclude my first consideration: it is no wonder if the justice of God, which is to see that his Glory receiue no damage, require that our esteeme of this his greatest mercy, which himselfe values so farre aboue all his other mercies, should so far exceed our esteeme of any other matters though otherwise most excellent in themselves and deare vnto vs, that our very esteeme of them may be but a disesteeme and a hatred if compared to our esteeme of his loue in Christ.

Confid. 2. If a man professe never so much loue vnto Christ, if hee doe indeed preferre him before never so many conveniences of this life, yet if hee loue but any one

The second Reason.

K 4

thing

26 *The triall of a Christians*

thing in the world never so little better then hee doth Christ, he doth him in effect as much dishonour as he that never lookes after him at all. Thus much I intimated before; but what I did but touch vpon, and in reference to God the father, I will now amplify with speciall references vnto God the sonne. It is all

It is all one  
not to e-  
steeme  
Christ at al  
and to pre-  
ferre one  
though but  
one con-  
tentment  
before him

one, as I said before, not to esteeme a pearle at all, and to esteeme it lesse worth then a barley-corne: in like manner, though wee preferre Christ before never so many profits and pleasures, yet if there remaine behind one darling contentment which wee are resolved to keepe whatsoever may become of his glory or our interest in him: wee doe in the issue esteeme him not at all, because wee still wittingly

tingly value him below that which is infinitely worse then dung in comparison of him. When a saleable commodity is offered vpon reasonable price, we vse to say that if it be not worth that, it's worth iust nothing : Now our part in Christ is so infinitely overworth any thing that wee can possibly giue for it, that by farre better reason wee may say, that he that thinkes it not cheape bought with all that he hath even to his last breath, indeed thinkes it worth nothing at all. Let a woman loue her husband better then a million of men, yet if shee loue but any one man in the world better then her husband, hee will giue her but little thanks for louing him aboue so many others.

But to amplify this point  
K 5 more

28. *The triall of a Christians*  
more distinctly, let vs briefly  
consider that transcendent  
pitch of loue we owe first vn-  
to the benefits of Christ; se-  
condly vnto his person; All  
those inestimable benefits  
which wee make account of  
by Christ may bee reduced to  
2. heads 1. a ranstone 2. an in-  
heritance. The ranstone is  
from horours and those tor-  
ments which are infinite for  
smart, variety and duration,  
which wee haue all deserved  
a thousand times over, and  
therefore the case being thus  
with vs, though wee looked  
for nothing but such a ranstone  
by our Saviour, though he had  
procured vs only this that af-  
ter this life wee should spend  
eternity in a *Limbus* vnac-  
quainted with any paine or  
pleasure, yea though hee had  
procured vs only the morta-  
lity.

Had the  
blessings  
procured  
by Christ  
beene infi-  
nitely lesse  
then they  
are, they  
had bin in-  
estimable.



lity of our soules, that they might perish with our bodies; I say this alone had beene beyond all proportion, better for vs then the whole world: seeing what would a thousand worlds doe vs good if after a while wee must bee packed out of them all into that place where we shall evertastingly curse the day that ever wee were borne or made reasonable creatures. But now that besides all this, wee make first account for an inheritance by him, an *inheritance immortall, undefiled, reserved in heaven for vs*, seeing wee expected to be made heires with Christ in that glory which hee had with his father before the beginning of the world, of that glory, the least sparke of which if visible to bodily eyes would shame all the beauty, pompe and bravery.

30 *The triall of a Christians*

bravery of the world, and whatsoever the Magnifico's of the earth are proud of, it is a stupidity worse then any madnesse to conceiue, we esteeme sufficiently of such glorious hopes, if vpon deliberate choice we make much but of any one indearement of this life which may any way hinder our assurance of them. 2. for our loue vnto the person of Christ, equity requires that we should loue him with a loue yet more overtopping then either our ransome or inheritance, and therefore it will be yet a more intollerable extremity of madnesse, to imagine we loue him with an acceptable degree of affection, as long as we dare to bring the most louely object that wee can picke out of the storehouse of nature within the compassse

*sincere loue vnto Christ. 31*

compassie of a comparison. Wee shoulde  
with him. I say, reason loue Chr  
requires that wee should person  
loue his person more entire- more cer  
ly then his benefits, that wee rely then  
should preferre his glory be- his benef  
fore eternall life it selfe. Our  
Saviour is contented that our  
feare of misery and desire of  
happines, should first enter vs  
into the loue of him, that til we  
know him better wee should  
loue him onely for our owne  
sakes and his benefits, but after  
that he hath sent his spirit to  
expound the mystery of his  
loue vnto vs more clearely, to  
make vs lay to heart not onely  
what he hath purchased for vs,  
but also how deare the pur-  
chase cost him, how though he  
*was rich, yet for our sakes hee*  
*became poore that wee through*  
*his poverty might be made rich*  
as

32 *The triall of a Christians*

as the Apostle passionately delin-  
 ers it, 1. Cor. 8. 9. how being  
 every way equall with God,  
 Phil. 2. 7. *in uero*, he was faine  
 to emptie and strip himselfe as  
 it were of all his royaltie that  
 he might compasse these great  
 matters for vs, for whom hee  
 had not the least reason to doe  
 the least good: when his spirit  
 hath effectually melted our  
 hearts with these considerati-  
 ons, we shall perceaue our lo-  
 uing him chiefly for our owne  
 salvation to be somewhat too  
 grosse and mercenary loue, be-  
 ing not much different from  
 that of a woman who loues her  
 joynture better then her hus-  
 band, or that of a sonne, who  
 loues his Father chiefly for his  
 patrimony. And though hi-  
 therto wee haue loued Christ  
 only because wee hope to get  
 by him, yet now that we know  
 what

is a mer-  
 cenary loue  
 loue  
 Christ chief-  
 ly for our  
 own salu-  
 tion.

what the kisses of his mouth meane, that which we principally loue in him is his loue, & hauing before loued the giuer for the gift, by a kinde of regresse in our affection, wee henceforth strue to loue gift for the giuer. But this point though many of Gods children knowe it to bee most reasonable, and haue found it most comfortable, yet I knowe it will seeme to many both too rigide and too curious, and therefore I dismisse it.

All that hath beene deliuered in my second consideratiō may bee summed vp in this excellent conclusion. So much onely wee doe loue Christ as wee loue him more then any thing else besides though neuer so louely: 1. Because wee haue infinitely more reason to loue him then it is possible

So much  
only we  
loue Ch  
as we lo  
him bee  
then any  
thing else

we

34 *The triall of a Christians*

wee should haue to loue any thing else : and therefore it is not to be accounted loue vnto him, if wee can afford as much and more to something else:  
2. Because if we loue but one thing better then we doe him, that one thing may force vs to despight, forsake, and betray him as accursedly as if we preferred a hundred things before him : yea, hee that resolutely preferres but one thing before his communion with Christ will quickly be entreated by his owne heart to preferre more. He therefore that would certainly knowe how much hee loues his blessed Saviour, that would judge exactly of the measure of his loue vnto him, must not doe it by feeling the pulse as it were, or calculating the degrees of his affectiō vnto him; but by comparing

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 35

paring his affectiō vnto Christ with his affections vnto other matters, and considering how farre that hath got the start of these, and what overplus it hath beyond them all in the comparifon; for so much and no more doth hee indeed loue Christ. For it deserues obseruation: that we cannot judge of an affection by its single exercises what it does alone by it selfe, but onely when it is brought within the lists, when it's put to wrestle for the mastery with other affections in the same heart. Where it comes to passe that of two affections of the same kinde, the weaker may proue the stronger, if seated in a heart, where as weake as it is, it hath the soveraignty over all the other affections proportionally weaker then it selfe; and the stronger

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ger may proue the weaker if it dwell in such a heart, wherein it is overmatched with some one at least stronger then it selfe. Did I loue Christ Iesus with as eminent degree of loue as ever did the most resolute Martyr, yet were it possible that I should loue any endearment of this life never so little beyond that pitch, my loue would be as good as none at all; yea the same measure of loue which made him a glorious Martyr, would not keepe me from being an accursed Apostate, seeing that if I were put to it, as he was, that I must either renounce my Saviour or my other contentment, this would hold me so fast, that it would make mee most desperately let him goe: and this would bee not because my loue vnto Christ was in it selfe weaker



weaker then the Martyrs: I supposed the contrary: but because my affection vnto something else was stronger then any affection in the Martyr, & too strong to be over-mastred by my loue vnto Christ.

But here some may put in a foolish question; though a Disciple of Christ must not loue any thing better then his Master, yet may he not loue some things as well? I answered the conceipt is impossible. First, Because it is an impossibility, that for any continuance our affections should bee settled in an equall size vpon two objects, which commonly fall crosse one to the other & may ever and anon bee brought in opposition one against the other. Now whatsoever wee loue besides Christ vnlesse it be in subordination vnto him, either

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either actually, when we particularly thinke of it & intend it, or habitually, in the generall constant purpuse of our minds, wee loue it in opposition to him either explicite & direct, or implicite and interpreta-tiue, as the Schooles speake (that is) such neglect of him as he wil interpret opposition. All this we learne from him-  
 selfe who hath pronounced it impossible that one mā should *serue two masters*, and his rea-  
 son is, *hee must needs hate the one, and loue the other*, *Math.*  
*6. 24.* 2. Wee may note that loue and the rest of the affecti-  
 ons may bee considered two waies. 1. Physically, as they are qualities in the soule. 2. Morally, in respect of their motiues and other morallizing circumstances. Now suppose it were possible that wee  
 should

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 39

should loue Christ and some worldly contentment which the very same degree of affection, although these loues would bee equall considered naturally as qualities, yet considered morally, our loue of Christ would be farre lesse than our loue of the other contentment: seeing our loue of that vpon small reasons would bee as great as our loue of Christ vpon the greatest reasons that ever were, or ever can bee to obserue and perswade the greatest loue. Thus in two considerations haue you heard explained, confirmed, and amplified this maine doctrine, whoeuer hee bee that makes account to bee the better for his profession of Christ.

Before I descend to application I suppose it expedient to vindicate this fundamentall point

If we loue any contentment equally with Christ mee loue Christ indeed farre lesse than that contentment.

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point from some exceptions which it may be charged with by such as doe not or will not vnderstand it.

The point  
vindica-  
ed from  
some exce-  
ptions.

In the first place, it may be objected, if none can get the rich pearle in the parable but he that will giue all hee hath for it: if none can haue his part in Christ but he that prizeth it aboue his life, and is ready to buy it with whatsoeuer is deare vnto him, what meanes then that Evangelicall proclamation *Esa. 55. 1*, *Ho every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, and hee that hath no money: come and buy milk without money, and without price?* What meanes that nuptiall invitation, *Rev. 22. The Spirit & the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, & whosoever wil, let him take of the water of life freely.* What are we invited

*sincere love unto Christ.* 41

invited and entreated to drink on free cost of the water of life, and yet must we venture our liues for it, and breake through a whole host of Philistines for it, as the Worthies of David did for the waters of Bethel. 2. *Sam.* 23. Are wee made belecue that Christ is given vs freely, and yet must we buy him, and buy him with all that wee haue? I answered, 1. That proclamation in the Prophet, and invitation in the Apocalyps are not to be so vnderstood, as if God required nothing on their parts who shall partake of his promises in Christ, but only to step forth and challenge them. The sense and scope of those places is this, whereas worldly commodities though never so vaine and transitory cannot be gotten without price, so that  
he

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he that is pennileffe must bee content to goe without them, those heavenly and everlasting commodities are attaineable to all sorts of men, as well to beggars as to Princes, poverty can hinder no man from buying them, hee that hath not a penny may come and drinke as freely of the waters of life as he that hath coffers full. As God expects from vs whatsoever we haue, so that which we haue for him shall serue the turne though it bee never so little, though wee haue nothing but the shirt on our backes; but our naked, diseased carkasses, yet if we are willing to giue them for Christ, they shall bee sufficient pay. God turnes away no chapman because hee cannot giue enough, but only because hee will not giue what he can. For if there  
be

*Sincere Love vnto Christ* 43

be first a willing minde, God  
accepts according to that a mā  
hath and not according to that  
a man hath not, as it is spoken  
in another case. 2. Cor. 8. 12.

2. When wee are said to buy  
the pearle, to buy Christ with-  
all that wee haue, such like  
speeches are in no wise to bee  
vnderstood properly but Para-  
bolically; for in propriety of  
speech, when wee forsake all  
to winne Christ, wee doe not  
lay down any price vnto God  
for him, who hath giuen him  
for vs all and offered him to e-  
very one of vs most freely, on-  
ly we ridde our selues of such  
things as may hinder vs from  
receauing him being freely gi-  
uen. If one should offer mee  
handfulls of Gold, I for the  
present hauing my hands full  
of clay, I should quickly be rid  
of the clay that I may finger  
the

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the gold, yet I doe not pay him  
for his gold with my clay, but  
only prepare my selfe to re-  
ceiue it. In like manner there  
being an infinitely greater dis-  
proportion betwene Christ  
and the most precious com-  
modities that wee can forgoe  
for him, then there is between  
gold and clay when wee dis-  
member our selues of any  
thing that wee may make  
room for Christ, wee doe not  
purchase him, but prepare to  
entertaine him comming of  
his owne accord vnto vs.

But is it so in earnest,  
will some say? must every mā  
that will bee the better for  
Christ, be willing to loose his  
owne life for him? This is  
worse then all the rest, why  
then, vpon the point, none can  
bee saved but Martyrs. An-  
swer, wee may safely asseure  
that



that none are saued but Martyrs; Martyrs either actually or habitually; hauing faith enough to encourage and loue to constrain them to be Martyrs, if the honour of their profession should require it. If this assertion make any mans cares to tingle, I knowe not why the hearing of my Text should not be as offensive vnto him, or the reading of diuers other speeches of our Saviour, requiring a resolute disesteeme and contempt of life in any man whosoever hee be that dares to set his hand to his plough, or seriously set his face towards heauen.

There is a Popish scribler not worth the naming in a pulpit, who would perswade vs that these speeches of our Saviour are not precepts of necessity vnto all that shall be

Whether  
any can be  
saued but  
Martyrs,

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faued by him, but onely coun-  
 fells of perfection to such as  
 will not bee contented to bee  
 doore-keepers in heauen, but  
 ayme at some higher place.  
 For my part I cannot expresse  
 how injurious I conceaue this  
 glosse, as well to our Saviours  
 person, as to his doctrine. But  
 if any man present to set his  
 owne heart at quiet, bee wil-  
 ling to bee of this fellowes  
 mind, I leaue him three things  
 to pause vpon. 1. Our Saviour  
 did not speake thus much only  
 to some select, forward men,  
 only to his speciall Disciples,  
 but as it is in the verse prece-  
 dent, *there went great multi-  
 tudes after him, and he turned  
 and said vnto them, If any man,  
 &c.* But perhaps though hee  
 addresse his discourie to them  
 altogether, yet hee intended it  
 not to each of them single. No,  
 what

*Sincere loue vnto Christ.* 47

what then meane the first words of my Text, *If any man &c.* what meanes the conclusion of his discourse, *uerse 33.*

*So likewise whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath he cannot be my Disciple.* 2.

The considerations which shew the equity of those conditions required by our Saviour, the reasons inducing him to require so great a measure of loue, as you haue heard before, equally concern every man, and therefore there is no reason why wee should imagine that our Saviour proposed these hard termes only to some few & not to all that would haue any interest in him. 3. Contempt of life in comparison of a communion with Christ is most vniuersally requisite in all sorts of men.

1. Because the Church never

L 3

enjoyes

48 *The triall of a Christian*  
enjoyes such a calme, but a terrible storme may vnspectedly dash it away, and therefore there is no man though borne in the most peaceable time of the Gospell, but ere the glasse of his life bee runne out, hee may be overtaken with a fiery triall. 2. Yea there is no professour of the Gospell, though hee liue and dye during the publike tranquillity of it, yet he may privately bee brought to that plunge, that he must either hazard his life, or else in some fearefull, horrible maner against his conscience dishonour Christ Iesus. 3. Many may take away our liues which cannot take away our other contentments, as Popish Assassins haue deprived Kings of their liues when they could not of their kingdoms. It is certaine, that whosoever  
cares.

cares not for his owne life is master of another mans, & by consequent of any mans religion that loues his life better then hee doth it. How easie were it for a Russian that had no religion of his own, to pull such a one into a corner, and with a naked blade to make him forswear his religion, as often as he pleased, yea if the tricke were in vse, such a one might be robbed of his religion vpon the high way seeing any man that were so disposed with a Pistol at his brest might make him deliuer vp his faith with as much hast as his purse.

3. It may bee replied if every follower must loue him more then his owne life, then it seemes that the weakest Christian, if indeed a Christian must loue him as much as the most renowned Apostles, seeing

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ing the best of them all could  
loue him no more then so, for  
*greater loue then this hath no*  
*man then that he lay downe his*  
*life for his friend*, witnesse  
Christ Iesus himselfe, *Iohn. 15*  
*13.* It seemes likewise that all  
must haue an equall portion  
of faith; both which conse-  
quencies palpably contradict  
both Scripture and experi-  
ence. I answere first without  
question all that shall be saued  
must bee saued by the same  
faith, *viz.* by faith of the same  
nature, though not in the same  
quantitie. Now that which  
breeds the mistake in this ob-  
jection, is a concept that to  
loue Christ more then our  
liues proceeds not from the  
nature of saving faith simply  
considered, but from some e-  
minent degree of it, which co-  
cepts is erroneous. For it is ve-

*sincere loue vnto Christ. 51*

ry observable, that the nature of faith, if true and saving, bee the degree of it never so small necessarily includes thus much: it being an assent vnto all Scripture revelations, especially vnto the Gospell promises, as most true and good in themselves, and farre better in the choice then any profits or pleasures in the world, yea the life or whatsoever may sweeten it vnto vs. Whence an incomparable writer of our own who hath dived profoundly into the nature of justifying faith, hath weaved the words of David, *Psf. 63. Thy loving kindnesse is better then life*, into his compleat definition of that faith whereby the iust doe liue. 2. Though all the Disciples of Christ must assent to so much by their faith, & expresse if need bee, so much by their

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loue, yet according as those  
 tastes and relishes of heaven  
 imprinted in their soules by  
 the spirit, vpon which the  
 assent of faith, and fervency of  
 loue are grounded are more  
 or lesse liuely and pleasant,  
 the faith and loue of Christi-  
 ans admit sundry degrees and  
 measures: but not properly in  
 regard of their esteeme of the  
 object (for all, as I haue shew-  
 ed, must esteeme it better then  
 life) but in respect of the radi-  
 cation and setting of this e-  
 steeme in themselves: so that  
 howsoever all faithfull Chri-  
 stians iudge and esteeme their  
 hopes by Christ to bee better  
 then life, yet they may bee  
 more or lesse in their iudge-  
 ment, and those apprehensions  
 which cause this esteeme may  
 be more or lesse cleere and di-  
 stinct. 3. It is true, that to dye  
 for



*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 51

for the profession of Christ, is  
the greatest possible expre-  
ssion of loue vnto him; for the  
matter of it there may bee  
great diversity and according-  
ly by severall degrees of faith,  
and loue may bee expressed by  
it. Amongst so many thousands  
as haue beene crowned with  
martyrdome in Primitive and  
latter times, no doubt but there  
was infinite variety of degrees  
of faith and loue, all which had  
but one common expression  
for the matter; but for the ma-  
ner of it, some laid down their  
lines more cheerefully and  
triumphantly reioycing that it  
was giuen to them, not only to  
beleeue, but also to suffer: o-  
thers with more deliberation,  
flaggering, & reluctancy some  
with Peter denied Christ di-  
uers times before they would  
dye for him, & canted & adured,  
and:

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and runne through a hundred  
of base sights before they  
would come to the stake,  
others behaved themselves  
more honourably & heroical-  
ly, and being glad of such speedy  
conveyance to heaven died  
with a kinde of Angelicall  
Majestic.

To drawe towards a con-  
clusion: if any honest tender  
heart, which vses to tremble  
at the word, and to mourne for  
its owne infirmities, be brought  
into dumps by this doctrine,  
teaching it to thinke thus with  
himselſe; if every one that loues  
Christ to any purpose must  
loue him better then life, and  
be able to dye for him, then  
surely my loue vnto him is no-  
thing worth. When I am in  
my best moodes his louing  
kindnesse is dearer vnto mee  
then thousands of gold and sil-

*sincere love vnto Christ.* 35  
ver, and I am of *Dauid's* mind  
that it is *better then life*, but  
yet if my life were in question  
for it, I know not what would  
become of me, sure I should  
never hold out but flinch most  
shamefully. For comfort and  
direction vnto such a soule I  
commend these considerati-  
ons. 1. This feare of flinch-  
ing is a good signe, that thou  
wouldest not flinch for feare:  
you know what *Peters* loud  
protestation (*though all men*  
*forsake thee yet will not I*)  
came to not long after, you  
know the story of *Dr Pendle-*  
*ton*, or you may reade it in  
*Mr Fox*, vlesse thy life were  
exceeding deare vnto thee,  
it would be no such great re-  
stimony of thy love vnto him,  
to part with it for his sake;  
vnlesse death were very ter-  
rible. Martyrdome would  
not

38 *The trial of a Christians*  
not bee either such an ac-  
ceptable sacrifice vnto God,  
or glorious wonder amongst  
men. To feare martyr-  
dome, yea and to pray a-  
gainst it with submission vnto  
Gods will, is warranted by  
our Saviours owne example,  
when he prayed so earnestly,  
that if it were possible the  
Cup might passe away from  
him, but still with submission  
vnto his fathers pleasure. That  
place concerning our Saviour,  
*Heb. 5. 7.* is very remarkable,  
*who in the daies of his flesh,*  
*when he had offered up prayers*  
*and supplications, with strong*  
*crying and teares vnto him,*  
*that was able to saue him from*  
*death, and was heard in that*  
*he feared.* I stand not vpon the  
words in that *he feared*, for  
indeed the construction of the  
words *καὶ ἐνλαβήνας*, is very  
vncer-

*sincere love vnto Christ.* 357

uncertaine, that which I especially note, is, that it is said here, our Saviour *was heard* how was hee heard? Marke how, and thence will spring a second branch of comfort. His Father *heard him*, not in removing the Cup from him, but in strengthening him to drinke it with victory: so art thou sure to be heard, if thou prayest as hee did: either the Cup shall bee removed from thee, or sweetned vnto thee. Remember withall, that God is never more for vs, then when wee are most for him, that his glory lies at stake as well as thy life, and that hee is more curious of that, then thou canst bee of this. *God is faithfull who will not suffer vs to be tempted aboue that we are able; but will with the temptation also make away to escape that.*

58 *The triall of a Christians*  
*that we may be able to beare it.*  
1. Cor. 10. 13. Remember  
that thy Saviour hath had ex-  
perience of all the amazements  
and horrors of death when he  
suffered it for thee, and there-  
fore cannot forget, both to  
pitty and succour thee when  
thou art to suffer it for him:  
for in that he himselfe hath suf-  
fered being tempted he is able to  
succour them that are tempted,  
as the Apostle sweetly infers,  
Heb. 2. 18.

Lastly, let mee commend  
this caution vnto the tremb-  
ling soule; Anxious distrustfull  
care for the future in matters  
of the soule, is more disho-  
nourable and displeasing vnto  
God, then in matters of the  
body. Remember therefore  
thy Saviours advice, *care not*  
*for to morrow, let that care for*  
*it selfe.* Afflict not thy selfe  
with

*sincere loue vnto Christ.* 59

with such sad supposals, what  
it. *Queene Maries* daies  
should come againe; what if  
I should bee brought before  
such a fellow as *Bonner*, re-  
member thy Saviours reason  
for his advice, *sufficient for the  
day is the evill thereof.* Which  
as it is too true for matters of  
this life, so it's much more true  
in businesse of our spirituall  
life. If thou art indeed entred  
into a covenant with God, if  
thou hast seriously and advi-  
sedly resolved to live the rest  
of thy time in the flesh by the  
faith of the sonne of God who  
hath loued thee and given  
himselfe for thee, if thou art  
indeed one who knowes what  
an infinite, endlesse, unwea-  
ried diligence is required to a  
constant, close walking with  
God, why then thou hast e-  
very day, every houre, omissi-

ons

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ons and commissions to looke vnto, thou hast continuall swarmes of thoughts, words, and actions most warily, and precisely to watch over, thou must tread every step as nicely and gingerly, as if thou wentest amongst snates, and walkedst vpon pinnacles, thou must ever and anon chaine vp thy beloued affections shorter, and deale roughly with those lusts, which perhaps are as deare vnto thee as thy life. What hast thou thus much businesse every day, and hast thou time to make suppositions for the future, and to torment thy selfe with presages? *Let to morrow care for it selfe;* abstaine from fleshly lusts which fight against thy soule and most dangerously in times of peace: stand vpon thy gard against thy sinnes of daily incursion, against.



against such temptations as are incident to thy present condition, in simplicity of heart resigne thy selfe vnto him, that hath loued thee and given himselfe for thee, and thou be confident, that neither life nor death, neither things present nor things to come shall ever be able to separate thee from him: this being most certaine that he that does indeed liue by faith, hath that in him, which, if need should be, will enable him to die in it & for it.

But what reason had I then at this time to trouble mens heads with such a thorny discourse of Martyrdome? I answer. 1. The habite of Martyrdome, as I haue shewed, is included in the most fundamentall principle of Christianity, loue of Christ better then

62 *The triall of a Christians*

then our selues, selfe resignation or deniall: and therefore they deserue no answer but silence, who shall thinke a discourse of it at any time to bee harsh and vnseasonable. 2. As the Prophet *Ezechiel* forewarned the Iewes, *Wee haue had mischiefe vpon mischiefe, and rumor vpon rumor*, and if mischiefe and rumors continue and multiply vpon vs as fast as they haue done of late, the daies may bee sooner vpon vs then wee are aware, when there may be too much occasion to practise this point and no time to preach it. The Lord open our eyes and change our hearts, the Lord of his mercy order matters for vs, above all that wee are able to aske or thinke, contrary to the cry of our finnes, contrary to probabilities, that the event may proue

*63 sincere loue vnto Christ.*

proue such discourses vnseasonable. Here now should follow a large application of the maine doctrine branched into diuers vses, but that if God giue leaue shall ere long be the exercise of another houre.

**FINIS.**